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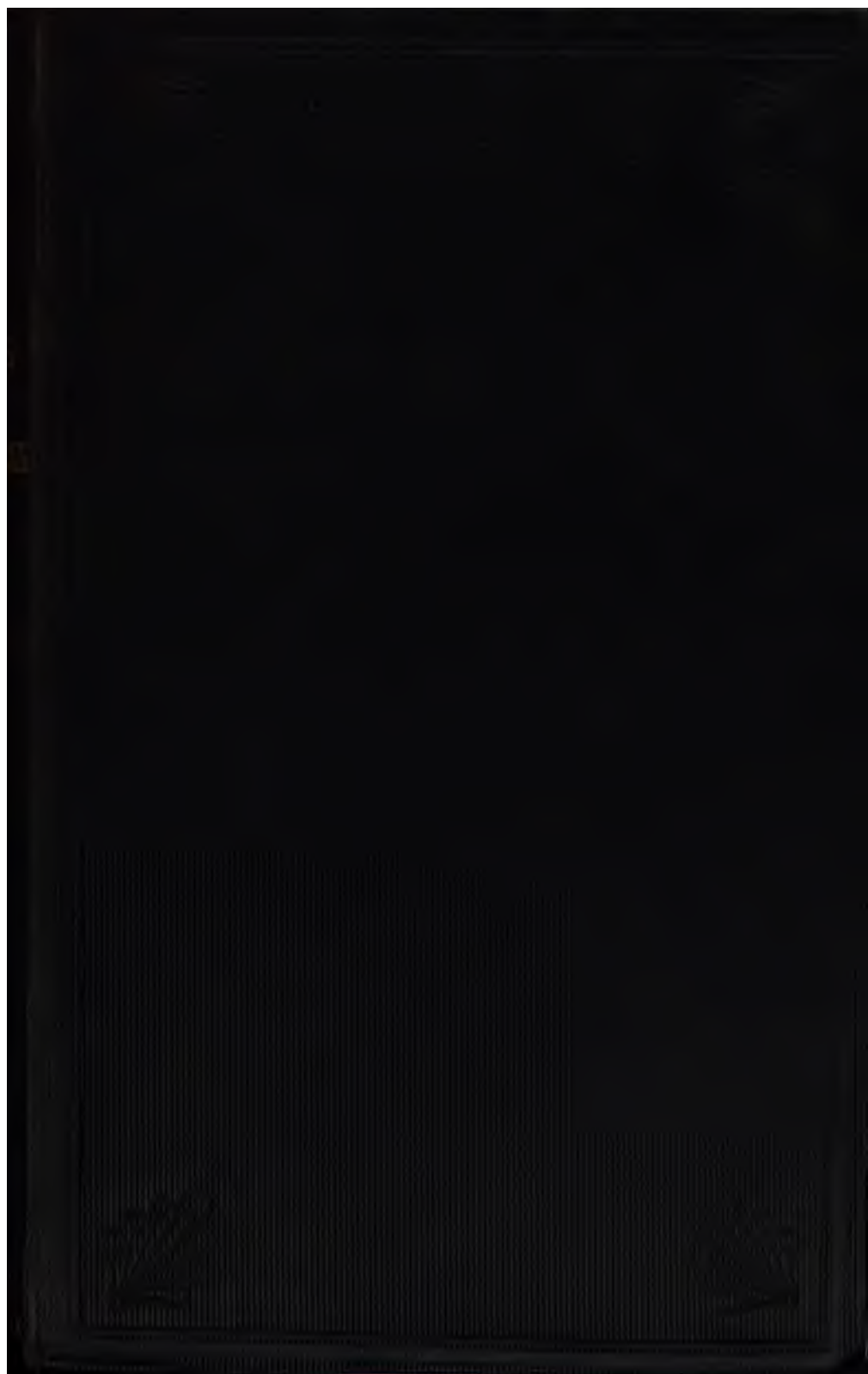
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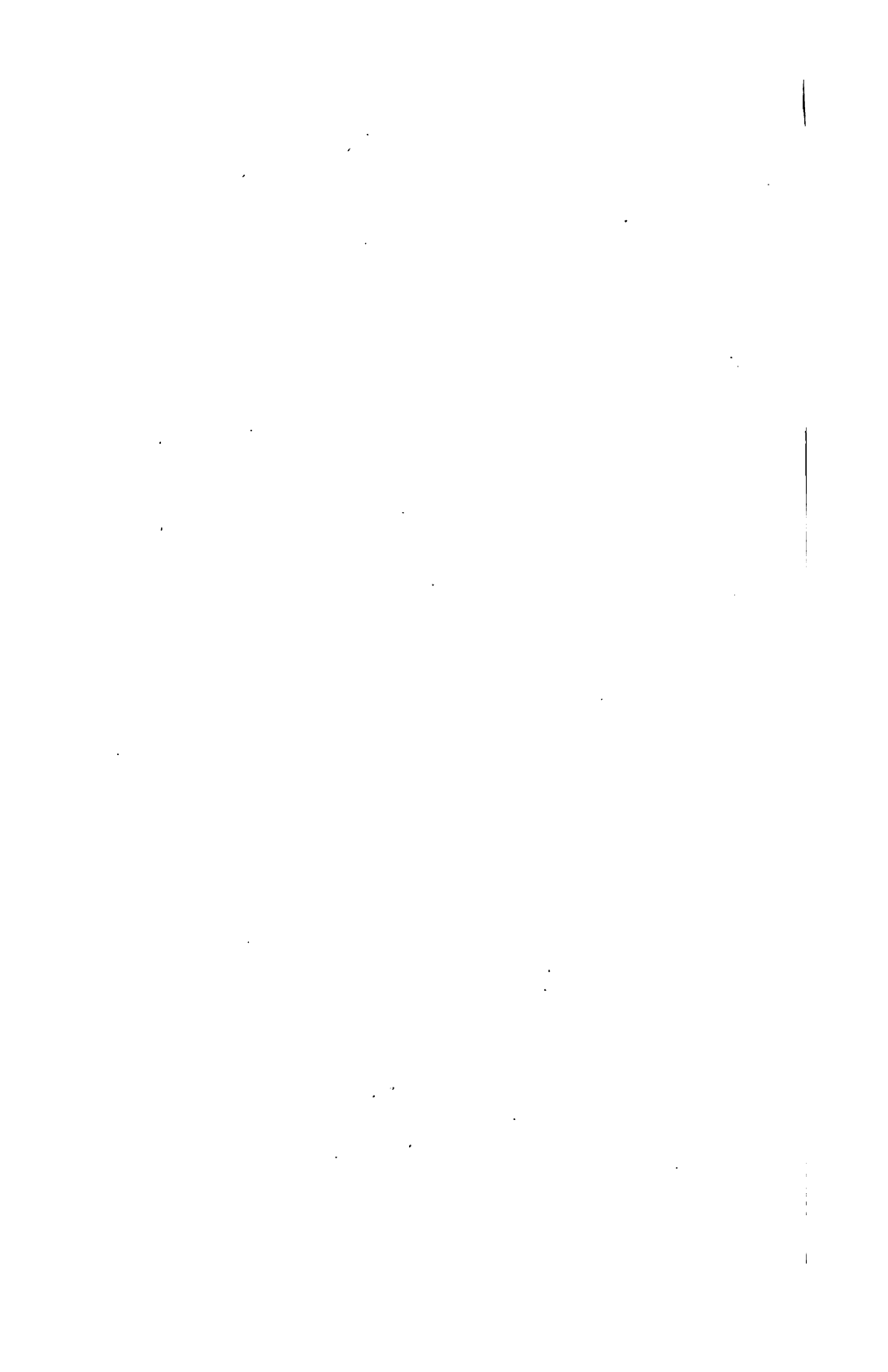
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الحمد لله رب العالمين
والصلاة والسلام على
سيدنا محمد وآله الطيبين
الطاهرين

WALKS AND WANDERINGS.



WALKS AND WANDERINGS

IN THE

WORLD OF LITERATURE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS," "THE GREAT
METROPOLIS," "TRAVELS IN TOWN,"
&c., &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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WALKS AND WANDERINGS.

JUVENILE RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD MAN.

CHAPTER I.—THE KING'S BIRTH-DAY.

WE love—who does not love?—now that we are considerably advanced on the journey of life, to escape occasionally from the business and bustle, the cares and anxieties of the world, that we may enjoy the luxury of a recollection of the infinitely diversified amusements by means of which we dispelled the *ennui* of the leisure hours of our school-boy existence—a period which we never recal to mind without awakening memories of the deepest interest.

It will be in the distinct remembrance of all acquainted with the north of Scotland, that, until within the last twenty years, it was the inviolable custom among the junior branches of the

male population of several towns in that part of the country, to celebrate each returning anniversary of his majesty's birth-day, by kindling large fires in the middle of the street, and affording other demonstrations of sincere attachment to the person of the reigning monarch, and of joy at his life being prolonged for another year. And we believe we are fully warranted in saying, that in those days there were none, young or old, among his millions of subjects, whose loyalty surpassed that of the juvenile community of Elgin, or whose joy was more the joy of the heart when celebrating the return of the anniversary of the day on which he was ushered into the world.

It is unnecessary to mention, that the sovereign in whose welfare we—for the writer prides himself on having been one of the number—felt so deep an interest, was George the Third, of blessed memory. No wonder that we loved and venerated him while alive ; for now that he has departed from among us we will say, that a better monarch never sat on the British throne, nor indeed on any throne whatever. After this

observation, our readers will do us the justice to admit, that we are not of those who invariably consider the reigning sovereign to be the best. Since on this subject we may remark *en passant*, that there are among us—to their shame be it spoken—individuals who would laud even Nero to the skies, were it possible that he could arise from the dead and accede to the crown of England.

The town of Elgin, some weeks prior to the return of each anniversary of the king's birth-day, was cantoned into two great divisions—the line of demarcation being the Shambles Wynd. The district that lay westward of this Wynd, was designated the "Muckle Cross;" and that on the eastern side was always known by the appellation of the "Little Cross." War was regularly, and with the utmost formality, proclaimed between the little urchins resident within the territories of the different Crosses, six weeks antecedent to the day on which his majesty was to enter a new year of his existence. That day, as all our readers will recollect, was the 4th of June—a day the very mention of which will, we are sure, recal to the remembrance of our Elgin-

shire readers scenes and events over which they will feel it all but impossible, to avoid heaving a sigh and shedding a tear.

Immediately after the proclamation of hostilities, the juvenile belligerents commenced providing wood for the bonfire to be lighted up on the king's birth-day. From fifty to one hundred boys proceeded every evening, after their dismissal from school, to some of the neighbouring woods, for the purpose of "drawing" home several small trees, and large quantities of brush-wood for the Muckle Cross party ; while about half that number belonging to the Little Cross, repaired also to some of the woods—generally to Fatox Wood in an easterly direction, to provide fuel for the bonfire which was to be lighted in their district of the town.

From the time each year at which the king's birth-day began to be spoken of, until it was duly celebrated, none of the boys belonging to the Little Cross, were allowed to appear on their adversaries' division of the town ; while, on the other hand, those of the Muckle Cross *men*—so we were all designated—who had the temerity

to venture on the territory belonging to the Little Cross party, had abundant reason to bless their stars, if they returned to their own camp with a whole head and a sound skin ; for on any occasion on which those little fellows who, more fearless and courageous than the rest, ventured to appear on the enemy's division of the town, they were always sure to return with scarred heads, blue optics, cut faces, and claret-pouring nasal organs ; and, in many instances, they were "sent home," loaded with all these choice benefits at once, as so many positive proofs of the warlike propensities and capabilities of their adversaries. The Little Cross party—we had the singular honour and happiness, reader, of belonging to it—was always much fewer in number than that of the Muckle Cross. This arose from the circumstance of our division of the town being scarcely half the extent of ground claimed by the enemy. But what the Little Cross militants were deficient in, in regard to mere numerical strength, was amply overbalanced by their superior courage and prowess. Often has a reluctant confession to

this effect been wrung from their vanquished foes, as the only condition on which they could escape a yet more sound thrashing than had already been inflicted on them.

The opposing juvenile parties were accustomed to meet two or three times a week, for the double purpose of demonstrating their loyalty to their worthy king, and at the same time asserting their respective claims to honour and courage, and all the other military virtues. The scene of these pitched battles was invariably the south side of the town, in the vicinity of the Weavers' Kiln. The numbers that mustered on the Muckle Cross side on these occasions, varied from twenty to sixty; while the heroes of the Little Cross were, in most cases, considerably fewer. The weapons in most frequent use were sticks and stones; and with these much damage was done to the windows of the adjacent houses, as well as to the persons of the little militants on either side.

It is really amusing to reflect on the enthusiasm and bravery which each of the parties generally displayed for their respective sides.

The heroes of Waterloo could not have been impressed with a more lively conviction of the honour and interests which were dependent on the issue of that great national contest, than were the Lilliputian belligerents of the two Crosses, of the honour of their cause; and on no occasion, excepting the instances in which the war had assumed so alarming an appearance that magisterial interference became necessary, do we recollect of either side yielding until one half of the heroes had been disabled by their wounds, and the other literally exhausted. We have repeatedly seen the conflict with stones continue more than an hour without the slightest intermission, and with the utmost bravery and spirit, before victory inclined to either side; and it was matter of frequent occurrence, that before the termination of the contest, many of the heroes were so seriously cut on the head and face, that the wounds they then received, are still to be seen, and will continue distinctly perceptible till their "dying day."

Each of the sides had its general and subordinate officers, its serjeants and corporals, its

drummers and fifers; its general organization, in short, furnished a pretty correct miniature representation of a regular army. There was, however, this one most material difference—that in appointing our *men* to offices of honour and importance, we spurned the idea of being guided in our choice by considerations of superiority of birth, or station, or education. It would have been regarded as an insult to the whole party—and the individual's expulsion from our ranks would have been the certain consequence—had anyone proposed purchasing a commission in our army. They were brave men and renowned warriors, and not gentlemen or scholars, that we were desirous of having at our head to lead us on to victory and glory; and consequently we were solely guided in our election of our superior officers, by the opinion we entertained of the little fellows' heroism. It ought also to be observed, that, while other soldiers fight from a love of money, we were actuated solely by a love of fame.

It is really delightful even at this distance of time, to reflect on the high sense of honour

which characterized both parties. Desertion to the ranks of the enemy would have been considered a crime of unspeakable enormity—one indeed for which no punishment, however severe, would have been deemed adequate. One of our soldiers had on a particular occasion been induced by the intreaties of a former companion, who had joined the enemy, to desert his party, and to enlist under the standard of the Muckle Crossites for one evening; but never, he seriously assures us, did he before feel, nor has ever since felt for any action of his life, such powerful compunctious visitings. He regarded himself in no other light than as a traitor to his king, and as a traitor to his cause.

James Blair, or Cripple Jamie, as he was usually called, was a choice spirit, and a highly celebrated character among us Little Cross warriors. He was never known, however unequally matched, to yield an inch to the enemy. He was brave and courageous, and more intimately acquainted with our military tactics than any other hero among us. High was the sense of honour which animated James's bosom, and

prompted him to deeds of valour worthy of the immortal strains of the best of our poets. Had we any acquaintance with the muses—which we deeply regret to say we have not—we would spend the residue of our lives, be they long or short, in singing his glory. He had only—he *has* only, for he is still alive*—to recite the numerous triumphs he achieved, and the trophies he won in his battles with those of the Muckle Cross, to elicit the unreserved approbation of his auditors. He had one complete or entire leg, and three-quarters of another; but rather than that the enemy should have an opportunity of shouting victory, he would ten thousand times sooner have sacrificed his full-length leg, aye, and his head to the bargain. To enable James to maintain his equilibrium, he had recourse to the use of two crutches; but as these could not be both used in the field of battle, he always, when the signal for commencing the action was given, threw aside one of these wooden auxiliaries to his available leg, and, as if animated and supported by more than mortal strength, rushed to

* Poor James has died since this was written.

the front ranks, to the dismay and generally to the entire discomfiture of his adversaries. Amidst the heat and confusion of the battle, James, in consequence of the want of a second leg, was occasionally upset by some of his own party inadvertently dashing against him; and some of the enemy whose wishes outstripped the fact, would in these instances exultingly exclaim, "Cripple Blair is *knocked* down!" Such an exclamation was the most annoying which it was possible to have sounded in James's ears. He would ten thousand times sooner have been assailed by the mingled cackling of some score of hens, the squeaking of half-a-dozen pigs, and the screeching of as many pairs of Scotch bagpipes. On hearing the ungrateful sound "Cripple Blair is fallen!" we have repeatedly seen James's countenance assume an aspect so terrific, so expressive of the boundless indignation that burned in his inner man, that his very physiognomy would have frightened from the scene of action the whole host of our adversaries, had they seen it as distinctly as ourselves. On these occasions, James, with a wonderful faci-

lity, always regained his feet; and, stimulated to deeds of still greater heroism and prowess by the mortification his sensitive mind felt at the above degrading exclamation, we have frequently known him leave all his fellow-soldiers far in the rear, and rushing fearlessly forward on the front ranks of the enemy, compel every soul of them to seek refuge in a precipitate retreat; always excepting those—and they were not few in number—whom he had laid prostrate on the ground by the stick his left-hand wielded (reader, he was left-handed), or the stone it projected with unerring aim.

In many instances, when returning from the woods with fuel for the bonfire to be lighted on the king's birth-day, the Muckle Crossites mustered all their forces, and assailed us with the intention of seizing our brush-wood and trees, and appropriating them to *their* purposes. The conflicts which ensued on these occasions were generally desperate and bloody, and in one instance were attended with almost fatal consequences. One poor fellow whom we remember well—and he was as brave a little hero as ever entered

the lists,—having been more adventurous than his fellow-soldiers, was taken prisoner by the enemy, who, instead of showing him that quarter to which his peerless valour so eminently entitled him, applied their bludgeons to every part of his head and body with such unmerciful severity, that he was closely confined to his bed for three months afterwards, and was all that time under the care of a surgeon.

One memorable attempt which the Muckle Crossites made to seize our “sticks”—the expression by which we uniformly designated our fire-wood—occurred a few evenings before the king's birth-day, in the year 1812, in the neighbourhood of the residence of that renowned poet, James Esbell. The enemy, who had been lying in ambush, suddenly appeared and attacked us just as we were about to ford the river Lossie with our brush-wood and trees, with the view of making a short cut through the land called the Pans. A number of us rushed into the water, dragging the wood along with us in the best way we could; our adversaries followed, and a desperate struggle ensued. We stood inserted up to

the knees—in some cases farther—in the liquid element. The opposing party laid hold of our sticks, we stoutly resisted, and a scene indescribably ludicrous was the consequence. Several poor fellows, on “both sides of the question,” who were unequally matched after having been soundly thrashed, were, by way of supplement to the application of fists and bludgeons to their persons, unceremoniously stretched in a horizontal position—sometimes on their backs, at other times on their faces—at the bottom of the river. With such resolute determination, with such heroic bravery, was the point disputed on either side, that neither of the parties were that evening able to carry home the sticks. We were compelled from literal exhaustion to leave them all night in their watery situation; and on the following evening we returned and dragged them home unmolested.

The place in which the Muckle Cross party always deposited the sticks they had collected preparatory to the king's birth-day, was the Black-Hole, or the Guard House; from either of which places it was impossible for us of the

Little Cross, to abstract them, as both had strong doors, and were securely locked. Our receptacle for the wood we had collected, was generally in an old dilapidated house in our section of the town. The enemy often attempted to break into our repository in the day-time, for the purpose of carrying off our precious material; but as "cocks always fight best on their own dunghill," a very few of our select band were always able to repel their attacks on these occasions. In one instance, however, what they could not accomplish by mere dint of personal bravery and prowess, they effected by stratagem. The ingenious little fellows, agreeably to a previous arrangement into which they had entered, arose from their beds one morning so early as two o'clock, and proceeding to our wooden warehouse, emptied it, without our knowledge, of every inch of fuel it contained.

The discovery, on the following morning, of this awful calamity, proved a sad mortification to us. The king's birth-day was fast approaching; and we were afraid we should not be able to make a respectable bonfire on the occasion. What was

to be done? We unanimously agreed to go to the woods for other sticks every day regularly until the 4th of June should arrive; and in order that every *man* belonging to our party should be found doing his duty in this respect, it was also resolved that those who should absent themselves without being able to assign an admissible excuse, should be subjected to the indelible disgrace of expulsion from our ranks. The result was that we mustered strong on every successive evening, brought home fresh supplies of sticks, and, in order to render our possession of them sure, appointed four or six of our *men* in rotation—according as we apprehended the danger to be great or little—to watch them during the night.

The woman who had generously proffered us the use of her ruinous property in which to deposit and secure our sticks, having had her premises seriously injured on the night on which the enemy, as already mentioned, carried them off, and fearing another attack would be made on the night preceding the king's birth-day, by which her house might be still more extensively

injured,—compelled us on the evening of the third of June to remove the whole of the wood we had collected, to some other quarter.

On receiving orders to this effect from our former friend and patroness, we were wofully disappointed and perplexed. Our anxieties, however, were soon relieved by an offer made us by Deacon Smith, of his own house for that one night, on condition that we should pay him five shillings for it. This ancient worthy—he was at the time verging on four-score—was a son of Vulcan, and was one of the most “thirsty neighbours” we ever knew. In fact, his unconquerable predilection for “the creature,” had procured for him the unenviable appellation of “The Drowthy Deacon.” We had always in the hands of one of our number, whom we appointed treasurer, some trifling funds, varying from ten to twenty shillings which we had obtained from some of the gentlemen in our district of the town, under the pretence of requiring some money to assist us in the purchase of fire-wood for the king’s birth-day. It is needless to add, that we gladly accepted the terms on which the

Deacon offered us his house. The stipulated sum was instantly paid by our treasurer; and the aged worthy forthwith hurried off to the nearest "hotel," where, in the course of a few hours, he and another kindred spirit converted the cash into those liquids which were most congenial to their respective tastes.

We removed our sticks to the new depository, and as by this time it was about nine o'clock of the evening preceding the 4th of June, nearly the whole of our party resolved to watch during the night, in order to protect our materials for the bonfire of the following day. The remainder of our funds was spent on whiskey, in order that by its assistance we might be better able to endure the fatigues of watching, and also be more courageous in case an attack from the enemy should require us to put forth all the bravery we possessed.

The best of our men were placed inside the Deacon's house, while the rest were stationed outside with particular instructions to apprise those of us who were in the interior, of the circumstance, should our adversaries threaten any

attack. For three or four hours all was peace and quietness; but at the end of that time the Muckle Crossites made their appearance. The noise of their approach alarmed the Deacon, who, half seas over though he was, had still as much of his senses remaining, as to perceive that his property was in jeopardy. He sallied forth from the scene of his Bacchanalian exploits—hastened to his own house—and at one time in the most imploring terms, and at another with the most dreadful threatenings and imprecations, begged to be admitted into his homely abode, that he might assist in defending it from the intended aggressors. The Deacon's real object was to turn us out, sticks and all: we knew the character of the customer we had to deal with, and therefore were alike deaf to his threats and intreaties.

The enemy by this time had arrived; and commenced attacking the doors of the house, under the impression that we in the interior would be so much frightened, as to give up our sticks. We, however, had seen too much service to be thus easily induced to act the part of

cowards; and our opponents seeing us determined to stand out to the last, began to break one or two of the panes of glass in the windows as the only little revenge they could indulge. This was too much for the Deacon to endure. He therefore seized a large massy stick which was lying hard by, and commenced laying about him with admirable effect. About a dozen little fellows now closed on the antiquated hero, and thrashed him with their hands, feet, sticks, &c., until he was unable to move; while the others broke every pane of glass—amounting to twenty-four—he had in his two windows,—after which the enemy returned to their own quarters.

On the following day, as usual, both parties had their bonfires; but no farther skirmishing took place. Before the return of another summer, the “Drowthy Deacon” died; and as some thought his death was attributable to the beating he had received on the occasion referred to, the magistrates interfered and prohibited all collecting of wood for bonfires in future; and thus put an end to a custom which had been observed by the boys of Elgin from time immemorial.

JUVENILE RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD MAN.

CHAPTER II.—HALLOWE'EN.

AMONG the many annual seasons of "joy and rejoicing" to which in our earlier years we were accustomed to look forward with feelings of peculiar exultation, there was one which excited peculiar interest from one end of the country to the other; but whose yearly revolution now passes away comparatively unnoticed and unknown both by young and old: it is unnecessary to add that we refer to the once important annual era of Hallowe'en.

In days of yore the return of Hallowe'en was celebrated in various ways in different parts of Scotland. We will tell our readers how the juvenile community of Elgin observed that interesting night when we were numbered among the members of that community.

Immediately after the schools were "out," we repaired to the Crofts, or some other place in the neighbourhood of the town, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements for duly celebrating the evening. One indispensable pre-requisite for this purpose was, that each of us should arm himself with the root of a large cabbage, which, in our Scottish nomenclature, was known by the name of a castock. As we were on these occasions somewhat fastidious in our choice of these roots, Hallowe'en was a memorable night in the annals of kail-yards. Neither dykes, ditches, hedges, nor any other obstacle whatever, moral or physical, could deter us from entering these beds of perpetual vegetation; and once in, it was a thousand to one if we did not eradicate a dozen or two of cabbage-stocks before getting a root to please us. Many a score of hearty anathemas were hurled at our poor heads on these occasions by the proprietors and proprietrixes of these yards; but what were anathemas to us? Nothing at all. To use a homely but happy expression, they went in at one ear and out at another. On one occasion a

round dozen "of us" had voted a kail-yard at the south side of the town to be better than any other in the burgh for supplying us with tall castocks; and although we all knew that the proprietor was a somewhat rough customer to meddle with, we nevertheless besieged his yard, and forthwith proceeded to the work of rooting up. While thus employed heart and hand, one of the little fellows who had been "inapt" to scale the stone wall which encompassed the kail, cabbage, and other vegetable produce, horrified us in the inside with the exclamation of "J——'s coming!" By this time it was somewhat dark. We, however, saw him opening the door of the garden; and though none of us were sufficiently adjacent to him to peruse the language which his physiognomy addressed to us, a consciousness that we were transgressors, coupled with our knowledge of the man, admonished us that our heels were our best friends. We accordingly all took to instant flight. Those farthest from him were sufficiently near a scaleable portion of the dyke, to get out of the way in good time. But poor me! I was nearer to him than any of my com-

panions in transgression, when the chase commenced, and owing to the superior longitude of his legs he gained so fast upon me, that he was in the very act of stretching forth his four fingers and thumb, to lay hold of me, when, (he was rather in my flank than fairly behind me,) he, to his ineffable horror and surprise, plunged into a pit fully six feet deep, which had been destined for the reception of raw material, (potatoes,) instead of a lump of humanity two yards in length. A shout of exultation, mingled with peals of laughter, from five or six of my companions, who by this time were safely perched on the top of the dyke, were the first intimations I received, that our pursuer had met with some misadventure in his precipitate journey. I looked back, and for a moment could not credit my visual organs when J—— was not to be seen! Can it be, I ejaculated to myself, that the man has been suddenly translated to some other region? Or was it his apparition, and not his "own self" that commenced the chase? I had not time to satisfy myself as to which of the theories was the correct one, when the bellowing

forth of a dozen or two imprecations from the potatoe pit, apprised me that he was fairly inserted therein.

But what, the reader will ask, did we do with our castocks? I'll tell the reader what we did with them. We appropriated the best of them to the purpose of rapping at the doors of shopkeepers, shoe-makers, and others of his majesty's peaceable lieges; and made use of the remainder for a much more mischievous purpose, namely, annoying old wives and antiquated virgins who were quietly rusticating in their respective solitary domiciles. But how did we do this? Why, we bored a hole in each castock, extending from one extremity to the other, which we aptly called a smoker, and then, after having placed a quantity of loose flax, together with a small piece of red-hot peat in this perforation, we crept on our tiptoes to the doors of those we intended to molest, and having felt the key-hole, or otherwise ascertained its geographical position, we placed one end of our perforated castock to it, and applying our mouths to the other, puffed away in fine style, until we had almost filled the house

with smoke. The astonished inmates were often wofully perplexed to account for the dense volumes of "reek" which on these occasions circled round their persons, and made the tour of their apartments with such rapidity ; and we have frequently known them suddenly start up from their seats, and taking the lamp, or a lighted piece of fir in their hands, set out on a journey of discovery through every hole and corner of the house ; and after all without effect. At one time, they would conclude that the "peat nook" was on fire, and at another that the chimney must needs be on fire, until their optics satisfied them of their error. On one occasion, three of our number had circulated so many cubic feet of smoke in an eccentric old maid's garret, that she voted the house to be on fire, and, popping her head out at the window, declared to some persons she heard talking outside, that such was the fact. The good people took the alarm ; and quietly stealing down the stairs, we pretended to have done so too,—vociferating most lustily, Fire ! fire ! fire ! The ominous terms were echoed by others, and bandied about with such

astonishing celerity, that in less than fifteen minutes, the old maid had nearly the entire population of the town in and around her abode; and such were the oceans of water brought to smother the supposed rising conflagration, that in a short time all the wells in the vicinity were nearly dried up. All hands were literally at work in some one shape or other; nor was *I* idle on the occasion. A couple of ladders were procured, and mounting them, I ascended to the roof of the house: I then stationed myself close to the chimney, and chronicled in its voracious throat, many a dozen pails of water,—not stopping, in fact, until the furniture in the interior of the house was fairly afloat; while the liquid element rushed down-stairs into the close, in perfect torrents. By this time some of those outside, who had been active in giving directions as to the most effective mode of suppressing the conflagration, cried out, that surely the fire must now be extinguished. A pause was made in order to ascertain whether or not such was the fact; and, in a minute or so, it was announced that our exertions were crowned with success.

But for the darkness of the night, and the confusion which is always consequent on the cry of a house being on fire, a discovery of a similar import might have been made long before. I then descended from my station at the chimney-top, thoroughly drenched with water and exhibiting a visage of a truly ebony complexion, consequent on the sooty and smoky atmosphere I had been breathing at the chimney-top. Many and cordial were the eulogiums pronounced upon me when I reached the terraqueous globe, by hundreds of admiring spectators, for the praiseworthy activity I had evinced in so critical an emergency. I thought, however, in my own mind, that had they known all about the matter, they would have used, as more appropriate, a favourite expression of an eccentric friend of mine, and pronounced my conduct in the business, "a piece of praiseworthy devilry."

But the deluging of the old maid's house was not the only evil occasioned by the false alarm which our mischievous tricks had produced : all the inmates in the same close were in a state of the utmost apprehension for the safety of their

property. Contemporaneous with the cry of "a house on fire," was a movement among the old maid's neighbours to secure their little all; for they seemed not to imagine the possibility of putting an extinguisher on the supposed rising conflagration until the entire close had fallen a victim to the devouring element. It was truly amazing to witness the expedition with which tables, chairs, stools, and all those sorts of things, were bundled out of the windows into the close. Such another scene of confusion could scarcely, I should imagine, have occurred since the eventful transactions at the tower of Babel. In less than fifteen minutes the various apartments were entirely gutted. Among other articles of lumber which made their appearance on the outside, was an antiquated virgin, who, from a principle of economy, generally went to bed at an early hour in the winter's nights, thereby effecting a considerable saving in the items of candle and fuel. When the cry of fire was first raised, this "lady" was fast locked in the embraces of Morpheus, dreaming away, no doubt, at a railway rate touching some swain of whose person, or,

as Lady Morgan has it, "organization," she was deeply enamoured. When the aforesaid exclamation awoke her virginship from her slumbers, she leaped in an instant out of bed, and rushing down-stairs with a celerity of movement worthy of a spectre, appeared before the dense crowd encased in her sleeping paraphernalia. And such paraphernalia mortal eye was never before fated to behold ! The appearance of the lady in so unique a nocturnal costume, elicited one instantaneous and universal roar of laughter from the congregated crowd, and this too, despite of the melancholy and alarm which the supposed fiery calamity had produced in the minds of the good people. The upper part of her ladyship's head was inserted in a flannel band three or four folds deep, which protruded so far over her phiz, as to bid defiance to the impertinent scrutiny of would-be-physiognomists ; while the extremities of the article terminated on its possessor's shoulders. The next portion of nocturnal apparel was some non-descript thing, of a greyish hue, resembling in its form a sailor's jacket, in which were deposited her arms

and waist. This was followed by some petticoat sort of affair, so thickly studded with patches of all conceivable shapes and complexions, that anyone might with the utmost safety have challenged all the antiquarians in the universe to have said which of the fragments constituted the residue of the original. This portion of the night costume of Miss B—— extended downwards to the neighbourhood of her ancles, which some cynic present aptly compared to a brace of portly bedsteads. Then as to her feet: if they ever came in contact with water at all, one might have safely made affidavit, so far as could be judged by candle-light, that it could not have been within the last quarter of a century. But I will not pursue the description farther; as my conscience is beginning to whisper, that by doing so I should outrage all the acknowledged principles of gallantry.

To return to an account of the amusements with which, in our boyish days, we were accustomed to celebrate Hallowe'en. One of these was the burning of nuts. We were always careful to garner up a few halfpence some time before the

happy night, to enable us to purchase a greater or less quantity of nuts, in order that we might burn our sweethearts. "*Burn your sweethearts!*" we imagine we hear some Englishman exclaiming, as if the people of Scotland were so many savages. When we so speak, we do it emblematically, not literally. By burning our lasses or sweethearts, all we mean is, that we were wont to deposit in a blazing fire—one indeed which, we are pretty confident, would have calcined a salamander with marvellous dispatch—a couple of nuts, the party calling one of these himself, and the other his sweetheart. If both the nuts, after having ignited, blazed away quite harmoniously together, our little countenances gleamed with ineffable joy, believing as we then did, that such a circumstance augured with as unerring certainty, as if the fact had been specially revealed to us from the other world, the ardent love of her we adored—a successful consummation to our courtship—and a marriage life replete with perfect and uninterrupted happiness. But if it so happened, as it sometimes did, that the nut representing our sweetheart started up

and jumped to a distance, that was a fearfully ominous circumstance—one which indicated that either our affections in the time of courting would be trifled with and contemned, or that if our inamorato accepted our hand in marriage, the consequence would be serious and frequent squabbles, if not ultimate separation.

Next came the mastication of apples. Previously, however, to the application of our grinders to these, we had to go through the progress of “jumping” and “plumping” for them. The apples for which we “jumped,” were suspended, by means of a string from the top of the house, about six inches above our heads. Close beside each apple was placed a burning candle, price one-halfpenny,—so that independently of the difficulty of infixing our tusks in the former, after a bound in an upwards direction, every attempt we made with that view, was at the hazard of burning our jaws. But then the man who in the face of these difficulties and dangers succeeded in gaining the prize, was, by universal consent, pronounced so clever a fellow, and received so large a revenue of praise, that to be

the successful candidate was with us an object of the highest ambition. On one occasion—I remember the matter as well as if it had occurred yesterday—seven of us made upwards of a dozen individual attempts to pull down the apple; but without effect. We were all wofully mortified at this; but one lively little youth seemed to be peculiarly so. He expressed his determination to make another strenuous attempt, assuring us that if he should be again unsuccessful, it would be the last he would make that Hallowe'en. He leaped this time off a stool; but instead of darting his masticators into the apple, he seized the lighted candle, at the lighted end, in his mouth! Poor fellow! I shall never forget the wild, half-suppressed scream he uttered, and the wry faces he made, at the issue of the enterprize. And truly it was no wonder; for betwixt the flame he had extinguished by means of his jaws, and the quantity of liquid tallow, almost at the boiling point he had swallowed, the interior of his mouth was seriously scalded: it was indeed almost par-boiled. The little hero was forthwith committed to the care of a surgeon; and in

less than fifteen minutes thereafter we commenced the "plumping" part of the evening's pastime, just as if nothing had happened.

The plumping was always performed in a large tub containing water nearly two feet in depth. Into this quantity of water we "flung" two or three dozen apples, after having sectioned each of them into about a score of pieces. The fragments of the apples floated in rich abundance on the surface of the liquid element; and after having had our hands tied at our backs, in order that there might be no "foul play" among us, we all commenced snatching at them with our mouths, in rotation. Sometimes we raised our heads from the water with one, two, or three pieces in our mouth, and sometimes without any at all. On one of these occasions, a slaving dumpy little youth who had a fortnight previously been apprenticed to a cobbler, and whose visage was saturated with rosin, lamp-black, &c. —had made sundry ineffectual efforts to infix his "ivory" on a fragment or two of the floating apples. Chagrined by repeated disappointments, he at last made a desperate sort of plunge at a

huge piece whose geographical position seemed to be fairly in the centre of the tub; but in the zenith of his anxiety to insert his grinders in it, he had the misfortune to lose his equilibrium, and in an instant the poor embryo son of St. Crispin, found himself in an inverted position in the watery vessel; or, in other words, with his upper—now his lower—story inserted to the shoulders in the liquid element; while the soles and heels of his shods,—numerously studded with prodigiously-sized knobs, the circumference of whose heads almost rivalled the buttons one wears on his coat,—pointed to the fixed stars, or rather, I should say, to the ceiling of the house. It was nothing short of a miracle, that the catastrophe in the celebrated fable of the frogs and the boys, namely, death to him though merriment to us, was not realized in its full extent in the present instance. While the poor little would-be cobbler was drowning with all possible dispatch, we were laughing until our sides were literally like to rent in twain. Fortunately, the loud peals of laughter which we thundered through the surrounding atmosphere,

excited the attention of a female servant in another apartment—the only individual besides ourselves in the house at the time—and on rushing into the room in which we were located, to learn the cause of such immoderate merriment, she was horrified at beholding the extraordinary position in which the embryo knight of the awl, had foolishly placed himself. She immediately removed him from his moist place, and also transposed him from off his head, to his ordinary supporters. The unfortunate little snob, when taken out of the tub, seemed exactly in that state in which one would imagine the struggle between life and death is so equally balanced, as that the slightest inclination either way would prove decisive of the result. The water came gargling in copious torrents out of that mouth which but so recently had been so envious of the aforesaid huge slice of apple. His nasal organs, too, admirably performed for some time the functions of waterspouts; all which, commingling with his gaping and gasping, and the wild contortions of his visage, produced a rather odd sort of effect upon us. After a little more at-

tention on the part of the house-maid, the little apprentice disciple of St. Crispin gradually recovered from the effects of his disaster. The servant girl then left us, observing with much archness of manner, that an apple had ruined Adam and Eve, and that little sutor had great reason to be thankful that it had not *done* for him also.

When the plumping affair was over, it was customary with us to go out to the streets, and then resort to various methods of annoying the peaceable lieges. One evening—it is no marvel though I remember it well, for I was never before, nor have I been since, so nearly frightened out of my wits—one evening, I say, five of us resolved on turning our coats “outside in” for the purpose of disguising ourselves, and thereby perpetrating mischief on a wholesale scale, with less chance of being recognized. But there was one of us who relished with his whole heart, life, and soul, what he termed “a genuine spree,” and who, instead of contenting himself with a turned coat as the rest of us did, procured a young woman’s bed-gown, with which

he covered the upper part of his person. This done, he donned his sister's bonnet, the shape of which it is not in the power of man or woman to describe: it possessed, in truth, various shapes, and the upset price of it, had it been "exposed to public roup," could not have exceeded twopence halfpenny. These preliminary arrangements having been made to his heart's content, Johnny—so we always called the volatile and adventurous little hero—next coated his physiognomy so thoroughly with soot that anyone might have safely defied his mother to have said whether he was her offspring or not. Thus equipped for what some cuasists would designate the work of "harmless mischief," we proceeded to the west end of the town, with the view of "carrying on the spree" all the way down before us. We entered divers houses at the "west end," and seriously frightened the inmates; but so unearthly and terrific was the figure of Johnny Ogilvie, who acted as our leader, that hitherto no one ventured to meddle with us. There is nothing, however, but reverses in this mutable world; and we eventually entered a house in which we met with one who

was more than a match for us all. When we opened the door we saw no one but the mistress ; and our wild-like appearance, as it well might, elicited from her a loud scream. In an instant we heard from an adjoining apartment the exclamation of "What's the matter?" which all of us readily recognised to be the voice of her husband. With the velocity of lightning we rushed downstairs and out to the street, closely pursued by the last mentioned person. Three of us ran up the street, branching respectively out of the toll-road, away by Bilbohall, and round Ladyhill ; while the other two, including Johnny, ran down the street "with all their might and main."

I took the direction of Marywell, and did not stop until I reached the Bow Bridge, a full mile distant ; against which time my stock of breath was so much exhausted, that you might have heard me respiring at the distance of a quarter of a mile, lucky measure. Here I paused for a moment to rest myself, and to meditate on the question, "What am I to do?" The escape of poor Johnny, I set down to be both a physical and moral impossibility. "And when

once captured," communed I with myself, "it is to be feared, that however reluctant he may be to give the information, they will worm out of him either by threats or promises, or both, the names of those who were his accomplices in the business." On first thoughts, therefore, I contemplated becoming a citizen of the world, since it "was all before me where to choose," rather than incur the shame and punishment of being known by "all the town" as having been one of the confederates in such a "ploy." But to perambulate the globe is one of the many undertakings which require ways and means. I thrust my forceps into my pockets, and made the discovery that not a copper was there. What was to be done? I could not,ameleon-like, live on the air, and to beg I was ashamed. How, in truth, was I to pass that very night? Already I felt an undefinable uneasiness in consequence of being minus my supper. And independently of the necessity of some bodily aliment, where was I to bivouack! While I was in the act of cogitating on these momentous queries, some strange unearthly sort of figure riding on

some ponderous quadruped, suddenly appeared about twenty paces before me. Whether this huge monster, with his equally monstrous rider, were conjured up by my imagination, or whether they had visited our earth from the invisible world, are points which I confess myself to be totally incompetent to determine. But of this fact I am tolerably certain, that the unique spectacle threw me into a state of the utmost terror; my hair stood as erect as does that of a cat when preparing for the combat; and I ran home again with, if possible, still greater haste than I had "come out." To my joy and surprise, the first person I met after reaching the top of the School Wynd—that was the direction I took—was none other than Johnny, walking about in his usual costume, with his face washed, and exhibiting as much *sang-froid* as if nothing had happened. The grateful sight instantly calmed my fears and quieted my troubled spirit; and after recovering my usual stock of breath, we both went out to "the Banks," where the lively little youth recounted to me all his adventures from the commencement till the close of the chase.

He and another "of us," as formerly mentioned, careered down the street as fast as their heels could carry them, and were closely pursued by the husband of the woman we had so lately frightened. Still both the little fellows kept a-head of their pursuer, until one of them darted up Sawney Paul's close, and got completely off. Johnny, however, kept on the even tenour of his way, with his foe within a few yards of him, until he reached the School Wynd, part of which he flew up, and then doubled down the "Little Clossey," as we used to call it, thinking thereby to "jink" his follower. He would, there can be little doubt, have done so, in consequence of his superior knowledge of the geography of the place, but for an ill-starred occurrence. In the little gateway which leads to the street, two lovers were standing, most probably adjusting matters of a hymeneal nature, when poor Johnny coming in contact with one of the male fellow's clownish legs, fell prostrate on the pavement, and before he could recover his perpendicular position, his pursuer seized him in his clutches by the neck of the coat. He was im-

mediately dragged before one of the "powers that be," whose shop was in the neighbourhood. But the worthy functionary—peace to his manes ! for he has long since passed Shakespeare's bourne—was so dreadfully alarmed when he saw the couple enter his shop, that instead of waiting calmly to examine and adjudge the case to be brought before him, he was, on the first impulse of the moment, within an ace of jumping through his window into the street. And one could not have blamed him much though he had done so ; for, in addition to the negro-like countenance, and hermaphrodite wardrobe of the little hero, the person in whose keeping he now was, appeared under rather unique circumstances. When his wife was alarmed, and uttered the scream formerly alluded to, he was in the act of undressing himself preparatory to going to bed. He had doffed his hat, napkin, coat, and shoes ; and the only articles of apparel which adorned his person, were his nightcap, shirt, trowsers, and *one* stocking. Thus dressed, or rather undressed, he commenced the chase ; and, betwixt the

muddy appearance of his clothes, arising from the "guttery" state of the streets, and the exhausted, rapidly-breathing condition in which he presented himself, he might well have frightened any man of ordinary nerves from his propriety. When he saw the alarm which the mysterious and singular appearance of Johnny and he had produced in the breast of the man in "brie fauthority," he announced his name and entreated him to compose himself. When the functionary had partially recovered from his terror, he requested Johnny's custodier to state to him all the circumstances of the singular case. The latter was proceeding in his narrative, with as much expedition as a very limited supply of breath would permit him,—descanting with considerable eloquence and pathos on the magnitude of the offence which the swarthy-visaged little fellow, together with his coadjutors, had committed—when an acquaintance of Johnny's who, with others, had been attracted by the noise to the Bailie's door, applied, with a presence of mind and dexterity of execution which have been rarely paralleled, a cane he had acciden-

tally in his hand, to the knuckles of the fist which held Johnny in disagreeable durance, when its proprietor, uttering at the same time an involuntary exclamation of "Oh, how painful!" unconsciously let go his prisoner. The lively little hero was not only out at the door, but out of sight in a twinkling; while the functionary and the person who so lately had held him firm in his grasp, exchanged looks with each other of a most rueful and portentous character at the dexterous and mortifying occurrence. No one yet knows—excepting the few to whom we ourselves have told the circumstance—who were the guilty parties in the business.

JUVENILE RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD MAN.

CHAPTER III.—SCHOOL VACATIONS.

LIKE every other respectable school, ours had two annual vacations—the one commencing on the first and ending with the last of July; and the other at Christmas, which last invariably continued a fortnight.

The anticipated arrival of these seasons of relaxation from the pains and penalties of study, was to every little urchin in the school the source of great delight; but to me who was a superlative dunce—at least the master had a thousand times certified that *he* considered me so, by good sound thrashings—to me, the return of the vacation days were eminently gratifying; inasmuch as I was, during their continuance, at once released from the toils of my tasks, and placed beyond the reach of the Dominie.

In our summer vacation we principally whiled away our time in bathing in Lossie ; and going two or three times a-week to sea. On one of these occasions we employed a Lossiemouth fisherman to go out with us on an aquatic excursion, mentioning in general terms, that we would see him remunerated for his trouble. The day was fine, and we sailed about on the "deep blue ocean" for a succession of hours ; while the poor catcher of the finny race toiled away at the oars for our enjoyment, until the sweat dropped from his brow in perfect torrents. When unable to ply the oar any longer, the fisherman hinted the propriety of returning to land ; and at the same time muttered out several syllables about something for his trouble. At first we took no notice of what he said, appearing as if we had not understood the import of his phraseology. In plain terms he then told us that he must have sixpence a-piece from us ; and in equally plain terms *we* told him that he might as soon have asked a knee-buckle from a Highlandman as a farthing from us, adding, which was strictly true—and is so to this day with *some* of us—

that we were not in the habit of carrying money in our pockets. We had sufficient vanity, however, to conceal from him the true reason of this; namely, that we had none wherewith to replenish our coffers. The fisherman, on this intimation, flew into high dudgeon—and really one cannot blame him much for it—protesting that he would drown every man (boy) of us. We defied him, being at the time near the shore, and all of us being expert swimmers. In proportion as Saunders Took—such was his name—waxed indignant we became insolent, until at length our war of words ended in a scuffle; the consequence of which was, that while the poor fellow was in the act of transmitting me a forcible blow, he lost his equilibrium, and darted his head and shoulders into another world—the world of waters. With wonderful presence of mind, two of my companions contemporaneously caught hold of his huge pedestals, and with our assistance he was again placed in his usual position,—otherwise his clumsy person must have been instantly at the bottom of the sea; and we should have had the undisputed management of

his cobble to ourselves. The poor old man—he was well stricken in years—was so grateful for the deliverance we had wrought for him, that we heard nothing farther about “something for his trouble.”

Another adventure relative to our visits to the sea one summer vacation, is worthy of record. On this occasion we had risen so early as three o'clock in the morning, as a spring-tide was that day to occur in two hours thereafter. We directed our steps to Cove-sea; and after bathing, gathering dulse, buckies,* limpets, &c., we proposed returning home. By this time it was within a few minutes of nine o'clock; and as we had taken no food previously to leaving home, nor carried anything of a nutritive kind with us in our pockets, we were by this time, as those who have been similarly circumstanced will readily believe, enduring the agonies of hunger in an intolerable degree. In a half-desperate state of the stomach, we entered a two-story white-faced house on the top of the adjoining hill, determined, whatever should be the consequence, to

* Perriwinkles.

have something wherewith to satisfy the gnawings of the inner man. What, reader, think you, was the first object that saluted our orbs as we crossed the portals of the kitchen? Positively, a most capacious earthen plate lying on the table, and actually brim full of porridge, reeking hot, with a corresponding quantity of milk, and the requisite complement of spoons, which had been provided for four farm and two house-servants. We looked on the circumstance as a special interposition in our behalf, and when we entered there was no soul in the kitchen. We instantly fastened the door in the inside, to keep out vulgar intruders, and without waiting to say grace, commenced as brisk a cannonade on the said porridge, as ever occurred in the annals of gluttony. Just as we were within a few spoonfuls of the bottom of the dish, one of the maids who had been in an out-house came to the door, and to her inexpressible surprise found it shut from the inside. At first she concluded there had been some supernatural agency in the matter; but after a few vain attempts to force it open, she bethought herself of peeping in at the window to

see in what state the economy of the kitchen was. The reader will guess her astonishment, mingled with horror, when she beheld the sad havoc we had made on the contents of the earthen plate, and the dexterity with which we "clawed" its bottom and sides. An emphatical exclamation of "Ye little villains that ye are; what brought you there!" was the first salute which we received from her maidship; but we heeded it not—we returned no answer. With our bellies now full, we prepared for making our escape, which we speedily effected by means of our heels; only encountering, after we got to the outside, a few imprecations,—which merely served to give additional zest to our ample breakfast, from the aforesaid house-maid.

Terrified lest her mistress should discover what had occurred, and should suspect her of having been accessory to our feast—for such it really was—Peggy washed the huge plate, bowls, and spoons, as if nothing had happened; and with an expedition she had never before displayed, re-filled the porridge-pan, placed it on the fire, and attempted to manufacture a new

batch before the hungry workmen should come in to breakfast. Unluckily, however, before the water had reached the boiling point, the "men" located themselves in the kitchen; and being, to use a homely phrase, "like to cut the wind for hunger," they looked unutterable things on discovering that the process of porridge-making was in such an untoward state. "A hungry man's an angry' man." So says the Scotch proverb, and in this instance Peggy amply experienced the verity of the adage. The hungry boobies abused the poor innocent girl without measure and without mercy, for not having their breakfast ready; stigmatizing her as a lazy mortal, a sleepy-headed huzzey, &c. Peggy, however, deeming this the least of the two evils, submitted to it with amazing philosophy.

As in my juvenile years I was passionately fond of the marvellous, I often spent whole days during the vacations, in listening with the utmost admiration and wonderment, to the relations of a little old worthy of a weaver, named John Gordon, who resided in the neighbourhood. He was a disciple of the redoubtable Baron Munchausen

although I suspected no such thing at the time—and one of the few disciples who far surpass their masters. A single narration or two of little John's, will suffice as specimens of his adventures. He had been one time employed by an obscure woman, the wife of George the Third, King of Great Britain, Ireland, and France, and Defender of the Faith, to weave a web of cotton cloth, in a few weeks time, and to make its length as great as possible. He undertook compliance with her Majesty's instructions, and in less than a fortnight produced, by his own unaided handiwork, a web which extended from Elgin to London; that is to say, was six hundred miles in length. The web, however, was likely to be returned on his hand, in consequence of a colossal tom cat being accidentally woven into it. But the Queen was eventually prevailed on to keep it when he explained the singular circumstances connected with the cat's location in its centre. It happened thus:—During the manufacturing of the said web, he worked day and night, and being one evening peculiarly active at his loom, he did not take time to light a candle, but toiled away

by the aid of the moon's illumination. While thus engaged the cat had been scrambling about his weaving apparatus, and having in the first instance entangled one of the animal's feet, he wrought the whole of its body into the cloth before he was aware of the fact.

According to John's own version of matters, he was an unrivalled angler; and while one day fishing in the river Spey, he caught with his rod, and with a tippet of only three hairs, a salmon which weighed upwards of sixty pounds. The fish, of course, was taken home, and its interior dissected. The roe was thrown on the dunghill, and to his ineffable amazement he found the whole vicinity next morning in motion with live salmon, the open air and a rainy night having effected the wonderful metamorphosis.

Like every other hero of a similar character, John had made long voyages in every section of the globe, although the truth was he never had been farther from Elgin than twenty or thirty miles. In one of his voyages to the North Pole he was shipwrecked; but before the vessel went to pieces, he seized a favourite gun in his mouth, which

was loaded at the time, and then threw himself into the sea. After swimming a distance of seven miles, liberal measure, he reached a small island on which were growing a number of sugar trees ("Sugar trees!") and off which he ate a reasonable quantum. Thus refreshed he again plunged into the sea with the destructive instrument in his mouth; but he had only swum half a mile when he was attacked by a large whale, which, however, he soon quieted by sending a ball into its mouth, which came out at its tail. After swimming two miles more, he safely reached the land.

Such were some of the marvellous stories which John narrated to us, with the utmost gravity, in our younger years; and so fertile was his imagination, that he could have gone on in this strain for an entire month, without repeating any of those he had formerly told us. It is unnecessary to add that in my eyes, and in those of my school-boy companions who were in the habit of listening to him, John was a hero of the first magnitude.

The summer vacation of 1812, is one which

will be ever memorable with all who were at school in Elgin at the time. The punishment of exhibition in the pillory was, at that time, occasionally resorted to in those cases of crime which were adjudged to be deserving of a severe punishment, and yet not quite so severe as transportation or hanging. In this instance, three aged women, belonging, if I remember rightly, to a neighbouring town, had been found guilty of being, habit and repute, thieves. Imprisonment in jail had been repeatedly resorted to in the hope that such discipline would have what the present Attorney General would call a "tendency" to improve their morals. But no: the thieving propensity was much too strong within them to be restrained by so mild a sort of corrective. They had "put out their hands" again, and taken to themselves that which belonged to their neighbours. And, as a last resource, save that of transportation or suspension by the neck, it was voted by those having authority, that an hour's exhibition in the pillory might not, peradventure, be altogether lost on these female adepts in transgression. The day

on which the rare spectacle was to be exhibited, was chosen with a most felicitous regard to our convenience; for it was fixed for the one immediately after our annual examination; on which day we were always in that happy state of carelessness, arising from an amnesty from the toils of study, which eminently qualified us for the enjoyment of such a scene. Whether this day was appointed by mere accident, or whether it was chosen for the special purpose of our beholding the exhibition, is a matter I cannot undertake to decide; nor is it one of any importance either way; it *is*, rather *was* enough, that such was the fact.

There was one other remarkable circumstance connected with the choice of a day for this exhibition, which ought to be mentioned, to wit, that of all other days of the week, Friday should have been selected. On that day, a weekly market was then, as at present, held in Elgin; the commodities vended consisting of butchers' meat, cheese, eggs, butter, live hens, ducks, and other fowls. This weekly market was and is attended by married wives, decayed virgins, and

young lasses from all parts of the country for ten miles round, each carrying her basket under her arm, containing some commodity or other for the stomachs of the Elgin lieges. The hour, eight o'clock in the morning, agreed on for inserting in the stocks the trio of female sinners referred to, suited these country people as admirably as it did us. They were all at the identical place at the identical time, engaged in vending their wares, when the ladies were brought forward. The station at which the pillory was erected was at the east end of the Muckle Kirk, directly fronting the market-place. The appointed hour arrived, and their ladyships, honourably escorted by sundry town and sheriff officers, reached the basis of the hateful scaffold, which they most reluctantly mounted; when, without any loss of time, their feet, and persons generally, were snugly enough inserted in divers pieces of wood, &c., cunningly joined together by some craftsmen. Then the scene commenced in earnest. We school-boys were amazingly busy on the occasion. Large and frequent were the draughts we made, per force, on the contents of

the countrywomen's baskets around us. Articles of the most miscellaneous character, were projected instanter *from* every direction, *in one* direction—that of the three hapless beings on the distinguished eminence in the market-place. Eggs, rotten and fresh, were to be seen flying in hundreds in the atmosphere, hissing betimes, either by a mis-directed or intentionally mistaken aim, about the ears, and emphatically lighting on the heads, of the astonished and alarmed countrywomen. But the three ladies in high places, had an unconscionably disproportionate share of these oval favours assigned them. From the north, south, east, and west, these portable articles were specially aimed at *them*. And then such a spectacle as their physiognomies and wardrobes presented! The ample admixture of egg-shells with whites and yolks, which adhered to their persons, would have made it questionable to one who had not seen them previously to the commencement of the pelting process, whether they had faces at all. The eyes of all were completely buried, and only the point of the nose of one of them, was discoverable amidst the half-

liquid mixture with which its fellow-portions of the phiz were so profusely coated. For the first few minutes, the respectable triumvirate attempted to appease us little rogues, by imploring, in the mildest and most affecting tones, our commiseration and mercy. But appeals of this nature were made in vain. Though to them the heaviest punishment they had ever had to endure, it was to us the richest sport beyond all comparison we had ever had the fortune to enjoy. Experiencing as they did the inefficiency of a propitiatory description of oratory, one of the trio of elevated ladies—Mrs. Oustie, from the town of Forres, was her name—tried the effect of some half-dozen bitter imprecations; but in this case also she was promptly silenced by the tangible argument of a Lilliputian egg, which one of my chief companions inserted with mathematical accuracy betwixt the upper and lower ranges of her teeth, while her mouth was wide open in the act of propagating her harmless ire.

But eggs were not the only articles put in requisition on this occasion—hens, chickens, and

sundry other species of the feathered tribe, were found very effective in the way of annoying the elevated sisterhood. One pair of chickens with their feet tied together, were "flung" fairly in the face of the aforesaid Mrs. O., the lady who seemed to receive most attention ; and as the poor creatures came in collision with her frontispiece, they seemed to indicate that in being made the instruments of punishing another, they were punished themselves ; for they forthwith uttered a most affecting "Chick ! chick ! chick ! chick !" Scarcely had they made their way to the surface of the globe, when their place on her ladyship's face was momentarily supplied by a dead puss. Amidst the various animals, living and dead, that hovered on this occasion about the heads and ears of the "ladies," we only observed one duck, which had been abstracted from a country-woman's basket for the special purpose. On reaching Mrs. O.'s physiognomy, her duckship darted both its lay feet on her couple of window lights, and but for the circumstance of their having been before shut up by the batteries of eggs, &c., they would have

been completely darkened for the time being. Her duckship on alighting at Madam O.'s feet, clapped her wings with much apparent dignity, and gave utterance to a "Quack ! quack ! quack ! quack !" The specified time for the exhibition at length expired, and the goodly triumvirate were unloosed, taken down, and conducted out of the town by the officers, amidst a perfect storm of hisses and abusive epithets.

So much for some of our adventures during our summer vacations. The winter vacations were generally spent in skating, sliding on the ice, making snow-balls, &c., in the day-time ; and in attending Jamie Mill's tweetles in the evening or "forenight." Jamie Mill's tweetles ! There will be yet, to hundreds of my readers, a charm in the very terms. I can picture to myself even at this distance of time, as vivid a recollection of the scenes and incidents connected with these merry meetings, as if I had attended one of them so late as last night. Jamie's domicile was located in those days in the vicinity of Ragg's Wynd. The doors opened at five o'clock, and the performances commenced at six pre-

cisely. Immediately as the clock struck the latter hour, Jamie was invariably at his post; and the sound of his fiddle was the signal for commencing the dance. Then in an instant the floor, if so it might be called, was full of light-hearted boys and girls, all actively engaged in "tripping the fantastic toe." Sometimes we mingled in the reel without any partner at all; and at other times we had four or five each at a time;—the latter circumstance arose from the redundant attendance of girls compared with that of boys. To Jamie it was a matter of no consequence how or what way we danced, or whether we moved our feet at all, provided we had paid for our sport in advance,—which, by the way, he was always wise enough to make us do. The price of each reel was the moderate sum of "one halfpenny," which we who attended Jamie's nightly balls thought much better spent in this way than in purchasing, as did some of our less spirited companions, the "last speech and dying words" of some unfortunate wight. Of Jamie's music—and he was the only fiddler—I say nothing. If I had but a poor opinion of it,

there is no saying but the fault may have rested with myself. Jamie fiddled away without ceasing until ten or eleven o'clock, at which time the doors were shut for the night. I was never a great hand at dancing; nor has my ear for music been at any time among the most exquisite. It is hardly necessary, therefore, to say that neither the music nor the "reels" were the chief attractions to me at Jamie's tweetles. It was solely for the sake of a piece of fun that I went thither. And glorious were the larks which were to be had in Jamie's demesne on those occasions. I used to luxuriate in the idea of upsetting the dancers, by tripping them, as if by accident. But the height of the fun consisted in two or three of us secreting ourselves in a dark nook of the house, among a cart-load or so, of peats and turfs, and thence in the first instance extinguishing, by means of a turf, the penny candle which was the sole illuminator of the ball-room. This being done, the genius of confusion and uproar stalked unmolested among the inmates, who generally numbered from eighty to one hundred. Peats and turfs, caps and hats, now flew in every di-

rection; and these, added to the lamentations of those whose heads had been made bare, or who had received a peat or turf on their craniums, produced a scene to which no description can do justice. Jamie solicited, implored, and threatened in succession, but all without effect. The uproar continued until such time as we had had our full of fun. On one occasion—the last on which I was present—one little mischievous urchin stumbled in the dark on a pail of water, and seizing it in his hands, he wickedly scattered its entire contents throughout the dancing apartment. The reader is left to figure to himself the effects of such a shower.

The success, in a pecuniary point of view, which attended Jamie Mill's tweetles, engendered the special envy of three kindred spirits—George King, Sawney Paul, and William Rhind. The first of these three worthies resided at the time on the north side of the street, in the neighbourhood of the post-office; and, in order to rival Jamie, he instituted a dancing establishment in the latter district of the town. Like every other person who has engaged in a new speculation,

George had shrewdness enough to perceive that its future success would in a great measure depend on the *eclat* which should attend its commencement; and knowing this he determined at all hazards to have a crowded house on the night of opening for the first time. Accordingly, he extensively circulated a notice to the effect that the dance would be given gratis, leaving it entirely at the option of the visitants whether or not they should give anything to the fiddler by way of gratuity. The idea was a happy one: George's habitation was literally crowded to excess; so much so indeed, that instead of there being room for a reel, dozens of visitors were obliged to stand at the door, who could not force their way to the interior. In such circumstances what was to be done? Without music our worthy could look for nothing in the shape of half-pence. He accordingly "struck up a spring," imagining that all present would be so charmed with, "I lost my love, and I carena"—George had not lost his love in *those* days,—that they would be perfectly satisfied with it, without the dancing portion of the evening's promised enter-

tainment. But he soon found himself to be in a grievous error. Contemporaneously with the first movement of the fiddle bow, a cap, thrown by some tricky youth, extinguished the light, and then the scene more than paralleled the one I lately attempted to describe in Jamie Mill's abode. George himself and his fiddle to boot, were both rather roughly used on the occasion; and to complete the evening's deeds of mischief, his window, consisting of eight patched panes of glass, was converted into innumerable fragments. Some of George's relations interfered, and the establishment was finally shut up on the very night on which it had been opened. George admits to this day, that the speculation was in every sense of the term, a most unfortunate one.

Sawney Paul opened a new establishment on the night immediately succeeding the one on which George King's was broken up. And as he was no fiddler himself, George was employed at threepence per night to afford his musical services on the occasion. Sawney's house was also crowded the first night; but as he stood with a

whip in his hand, and by its means disciplined the more turbulent of our number into habits of order, his second tweetle was but thinly attended; and the appearance on the third night was so meagre, that he whipped the few who attended out of doors, and permanently closed the establishment.

On the last night of Sawney's tweetle, a strange affair occurred in his neighbourhood. Which of my Elgin readers who flourished in those days, does not recollect the celebrated hero known by the appellation of Bassy? This worthy was a fervent admirer of the matrimonial state; for on the very day on which the remains of his first wife were buried—I beseech my readers to credit the fact—he took to himself a second spouse! so that the bread and spirits which remained after the interment of wife the first, served for his marriage-feast on his wedding with wife the second! The intelligence of so rare a circumstance spread with the rapidity of lightning through the town, and, as might be expected, so glaring an outrage on public decorum, engendered feelings of the deepest indignation in the breasts

of all the lieges, more especially in those of the female portion of them. We school-boys also were indignant at the circumstance—for no other reason, however, were the truth told, than that our parents and others were so. We immediately set to work with the view of expressing our disapprobation of Bassy's conduct in the matter; which was effectually done, by one of our number gently and unobservedly opening the door, and throwing a dead cat fairly among the luxuries on the table around which the wedding party were enjoying their rich repast.

I have said that among the three worthies who started tweetle establishments in opposition to Jamie Mill, was one of the name of William Rhind. Everyone knew this personage; and, though his habitation was in the suburbs of the town, at the eastern end, it was well filled on the first night; and more than that, everything went off with much *eclat*. William was pleased with the proceeds of the night; and those who attended were delighted with the entertainment afforded them. It was, in fact, the general opinion, that in the person of William Rhind, Jamie

Mill had at last met with a formidable competitor for the suffrages and halfpennies of boys and girls. The doors were opened on the second night fully an hour before the time appointed for commencing the dance; and several stray candidates for a lark that evening, arrived immediately after the opening of the doors. As William was, either from inclination or necessity, too much of an economist to use light before the performances commenced, those who entered first had to content themselves with a temporary seat in the dark. One little rogue embraced the opportunity thus afforded him of perching himself unobserved on one of the joists of the house; which, it is unnecessary to add, had never been lathed or plastered. On this elevated stance he quietly remained until the business of the evening commenced in earnest; when just at the very time that those present had, by means of the music and other auxiliaries, been wrought-up to the highest pitch of glee, he, unperceived, aimed a dish-clout which had been accessible to him in his ascent, at the candle. The aim took effect; an instantaneous

extinguisher was put on the light, and then the row began in reality. The same tricky rogue, while all was confusion on the floor, and darkness on every hand, applied a penknife he had in his pocket at the time, to a cord which suspended a "vessel-board," as it is called, along one of the walls; and down it came to the floor instantaneously, with its entire contents, principally consisting of divers bottles, earthen plates, jugs, tea-cups, bowls, &c., &c. William at once conjectured in his own mind the extent of damage done to his limited property, and waxing very wroth, as anyone in his situation would have done, he ordered every soul out of his house, "or he would murder the last *man*." But the question by this time was, how was our exit to be accomplished? The door had been fastened on the outside, by some lover of fun, by means of a stick, and for a long time baffled every effort made by us in the inside to open it. At length the little fellow in the joists, and who had been the author of all the mischief that had been perpetrated, lost his footing, and down he came; but, to his good fortune, he alighted

on a dozen of our heads, all closely wedged together, and while his person gave us a "whack" which we remembered for days afterwards, he himself escaped unhurt. The rogues on the outside who had hitherto held the door fast, now thought fit to liberate us; and off we ran home, terrified lest there should be a complaint to our parents next day in reference to the doings of that evening. But our fears were agreeably disappointed. William saw that he was himself to blame for allowing such an undisciplined band as us to enter his domicile at all; more especially for such a purpose. Need I add, that from henceforth William had no more tweetles? Jamie Mill, in short, had the supreme satisfaction of seeing all his rivals beaten triumphantly out of the field; he remained its sole possessor, and continued for years afterwards to keep up his halfpenny tweetles during the evenings of our winter vacation. Old age at last compelled him to give up business; and he now, it is to be feared, feels the want of the ways and means with which, in our boyish days, we thus furnished him.

JUVENILE RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD MAN.

CHAPTER IV.—CHRISTMAS-DAY.

ONE season of the year which was eminently a joyous and eventful one in my youthful history, was that of Christmas. Oh, how ardently I desired its arrival! How my young heart beat with delight on its near approach! How I luxuriated amid the various amusing exercises which characterized its return! And how deeply I regretted when it passed away!

The festivities and amusements of the season invariably commenced with Christmas evening. A reasonable quantity of Buckie haddocks—without controversy the most delicious of all discovered species of the finny creation—were always provided for the occasion; and to these quondam inhabitants of the “great deep,” we never failed to do adequate justice; in less equivocal terms

we always managed to replenish the inner man with as much of them as our generally-capacious stomachs could receive. And if our throats, on these occasions, felt more or less parched, we had an infallible specific at hand in the shape of sundry bottles of good ale. Well do I recollect the marvellous dexterity with which my masticators performed their functions, and the liberal potations of "home brewed," I chronicled in my interior. The secret of the thing was, that Christmas time was the only period in the year at which permission was conceded to us to eat, drink, and be merry to our hearts' content.

After this was over we dedicated an hour or two to a game at the teetotum, playing either for pins or buttons as the case might be. Wearied with this, we went to bed, to get a few hours' repose, in order that we might be better able to stand out the amusements of the coming day. Some of our more hardy little fellows sat up the entire night, and between one or two o'clock in the morning awakened the rest of us. The great proportion of the juvenile population of Elgin having congregated in the High Street, made their arrange-

ments in regard to the manner in which the remainder of the morning should be spent until the approach of day; but of this more anon.

Several reminiscences concerning my rising at the above early hour on Christmas morning, are worthy of being registered. The parents of many of us, and mine among the number, were utterly averse to our moving out of bed before day-light on this day of hilarity; because many of the amusements in which we engaged on these occasions were not altogether of an innocent nature. And in order to preclude the possibility of my getting out on one of these mornings, the doors were locked, and the keys concealed; and a very necessary part, namely, the anonymous part of my clothes, was also secreted. The boys came at the usual hour to awaken me. I started to my pedestals with amazing promptitude—threw on my hose without unnecessary loss of time—and stretched forth my hand to the place in which my inexpressibles were usually deposited; but how was I petrified with horror on discovering that they were not there! Some other local habitation had been assigned them since I had

fallen into the embraces of Morpheus. I groped for a little time quietly through the dark apartment; but was soon obliged to give over the search, both from the chilling cold, and the hopelessness of the task. I called to my mother in another apartment, to inform me where my trousers lay, promising and pledging a century of times over, that if she would let me out I would do "no ill;" but she either would not hear, or hearing, disregarded my most urgent entreaties. I was, therefore, obliged to make a virtue of necessity; and to insert myself again among the blankets; but well do I recollect that from rage and disappointment, I tossed about on my bed until day-light, without once closing my eyes. And what added incalculably to my vexation, were the audible cheers and merriment of my usual companions in the street.

Next Christmas came, and I was determined not to be again outdone by my mother or by anyone else. I had three pairs of trousers then—I wish I could tell the same tale *now*—and before going to bed contrived to procure, unknown to her, the pair set apart for Sundays. These I de-

posited below my pillow, and left all my week-day clothes in the same careless manner I did when going to "rest my bones a bit." And to make assurance doubly sure, I strictly cautioned the boys on the previous evening, not to make a noise, nor call me to rise by name when they came to awake me in the morning; but intimated to them that as I knew my bed-room would be securely locked by my mother or somebody else, I should attach a piece of cord to one of my ankles when I went to bed, the other end of which I should let hang out over the window, which I would leave partially open; and by gently pulling this cord, I should be awakened—rise from my bed—put on my clothes, and go out of the window without anyone in the house being aware of the circumstance. The little heroes were loud in their commendations of my ingenuity—protested that such a clever idea would not have entered into any of their craniums in an age—and promised they would come at two o'clock on the following morning, and gently pull the string. They were most faithful to the first section of their promise; they *did* come precisely at the

specified hour; they *did* also pull the string; but then so far from pulling it *gently*, as they had engaged to do, the little rogues vied with each other as to who should pull it most forcibly. Nor was this all: half-a-dozen of them, I have been credibly informed seized hold of it in one instance all at once, and then gave what Sir Francis Burdett would call a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether. I was profoundly asleep at the time; and the first idea which flashed across my mind as I partially awoke, was that some one was murdering me, by severing one of my limbs from the other; and under this impression I roared out most lustily, "Murder! Murder!" The entire house was dreadfully alarmed; and before one could have counted twenty, every member of the family, and from all the apartments into which the demesne was cantoned, was at my bed-side. Not taking sufficient time to look for the key of my bed-room door, the latter was dashed to pieces in the anxiety of my relations to ascertain what was the matter. A light was instantly procured; and to their utter astonishment they beheld me

lying horizontally in my bed with one leg at one of its corners, and my head at the other,—and a string attached to my ankle extended from it, the former hanging out over the window. At first they were astonished without measure as to how this could have happened, when I had been fast asleep; but the whole matter was soon discovered by them; and by way of supplement to the punishment I had received at the hands of my mischievous companions, my relations gave me a sound thrashing.

Though prevented by the vigilance of my friends in the two instances to which I have referred, from associating with the “rest of the boys” on Christmas morning, I had on one occasion before and another after either of these periods, eluded the watchfulness of my relations, and participated in all the sports peculiar to the juvenile community of Elgin on that morning.

One of our practices was to steal from the premises of small farmers in and about the town, as many carts as we could get our hands on, and then to “birrel” these up and down the leading streets until we had shattered them to pieces.

On one of these occasions we procured a cart belonging to a very eccentric character, called Saunders Stronach, a resident at the west-end of the town; and after making a tour of the High Street with it, "wheeled" it down to the Brewery Bridge, and then inserted it in Lossie. It was not without thoroughly saturating the lower proportions of his person, that Saunders rescued his vehicle from its liquid stance. Fortunately it was not otherwise injured.

Some of my readers will perhaps be shocked at the recital of such juvenile mal-practices. I cannot help that. As a faithful annalist I must chronicle them, although I can by no means defend them. The only extenuating plea which can be urged on the subject is, that we were so thoughtless and young at the time as not to have seen these doings of ours in the same light as the wiser and better portion of us see them at the present era of our history.

Then came the ceremony of "drinking sowans."*

* An article resembling thin paste, consisting of a mixture of oatmeal and water, and heated to near the boiling point.

Such of the young lads as were sufficiently advanced in years to have sweethearts, were largely supplied with this material by them ; but such of us as were of a more juvenile date, had to look for our Christmas sowans to such of our mothers or sisters as would get up in the morning to manufacture them for us.

In the course of the morning, two or three semi-glasses of whisky generally came in the way of each of us ; and as most of us were not in the habit of tasting this kind of liquid from the one Christmas to the other, the small quantities we quaffed on these occasions served to impart an additional flow of animal spirits to us, and to make us engage with greater ardour in the other amusements of the day.

After replenishing ourselves with a first-rate breakfast, we commenced playing cards,—in which exercise we spent the remainder of the day, always excepting, of course, that portion of it devoted to epicurean pursuits. Many of the more religious of our parents felt such strong prejudices against cards, that we were frequently driven to our wits' end for a place in which to

play them. One season—I recollect well—we could procure no inhabited place at all; and as a last resource, we were under the necessity of betaking ourselves for the purpose, to the New Shambles, where a number of us gambled away, at halfpenny farthing loo in the open air, until we were shivering from cold. A felicitous idea at length rushed into the mind of one of our little party, viz., that Tam Watson's domicile, at all times open to pilgrims and persons of all classes, would be a most eligible place for us. Such an adjournment was no sooner proposed than unanimously acceded to. To Tam's house we hied; but on entering it, though in the middle of the day, there was nothing but darkness visible. Tam's apartment was then in a close, since demolished, known by the name of James Paul's, although the property never belonged to the latter person. The room which our eccentric hero occupied, had never been celebrated for a superabundance of light; but after Tam had become its tenant, he filled up the only window in it, with a large black board, on which he could, by the aid of the light emitted

by a small fire, indulge his irrepressible passion for writing with chalk, characters which may be best described by saying that they were cousin-german to Egyptian hieroglyphics.

As the only conceivable way by which we could obviate the inconveniences of the pitchy darkness in which we found ourselves enveloped in Tam's abode, we purchased a candle, price one penny. We then seated ourselves on the floor, there being no such article as a table within doors, and rather a dearth of chairs besides. With the exception of the dinner hour, we played at cards in Tam's house during the remainder of the day,—receiving no disturbance or molestation whatever, excepting that the more timid of our number were now and then startled a little when Tam burst forth into those loud soliloquies in which he indulges till this day. About eight o'clock in the evening—well do I remember the hour—he impersonated on this occasion an antiquated chair standing before him, and after apostrophising the piece of lumber in rather maledictory terms, he rose up, laid hold of it, and dashed it into innumerable pieces.

We were all so terribly frightened at this sally of our indulgent host, that an instinctive apprehension came over us that some of ourselves might possibly be next mistaken by him for some of his ideal characters; in which case there was no saying but he might take and swing some of our little bodies five or six times round his head, and then, as a Cockney would say, "chuck" us down-stairs. Under this impression we all rose simultaneously, and made as precipitate an exit as possible; not, however, without two of our number having fallen in descending the stairs, and been nearly crushed to death.

For the information of those not acquainted with Thomas, it may be proper to mention that I have here given no exaggerated picture either of himself or his house. Tam was once in the army, and in our younger years—though from the infirmities of comparative old age he is weaker now—he was one of the most able-bodied men, perhaps, in Elginshire. He returned from America with a moderate pension, on which he subsists. Some time before or after he left the army, his intellect experienced a partial aberration.

tion, which has ever since continued without any variations in regard to degree. He is a great economist, especially in making bargains. In point of hospitality he has no peers: for he would willingly share the last morsel of aliment in his house, or which he has the means to purchase, with any stranger or poor creature. A wanderer of the world, of the poorer class, some years since stumbled on Tam's habitation, and resided with him as his guest for several weeks,—during all which time Tam gave him the use of his bed, while he himself slept on a few chairs without any other covering than his usual clothes. For twenty or thirty years he has never, night or day, doffed his clothes, excepting on those occasions, certainly few and far between, when he changes a shirt. He talks immensely of Spanish ships laden with bullion—all his property; and sometimes of an entire fleet landing at Grantown, or at some other mountainous region situated thirty or forty miles from the sea. Then his fertile imagination pictures to itself a hetacomb or two of evil spirits making their ingress to his abode by

means of the chimney ; upon which he is sure to start instantaneously to his feet, and under the impression that he is waging hostilities with these supernatural gentry, he dashes his peats and turfs, his only fuel, and any article of furniture he possesses, at a prodigious rate through his domicile. Excepting, however, in those moments when these sallies of the imagination come over him, Tam can converse with wonderful rationality,—more particularly when cheapening a pound or two of butcher's meat, or purchasing a load of fuel.

History tells us of a race of mortals called Malays, who, when anyone inflicts on them a real or supposed injury, run out to the streets, and knock down the first person with whom they meet. Tam acts on precisely the same principle. When anyone eclipses him—*i. e.* knocks his hat down over his eyes, or pronounces the word “Hatch!” pretty loudly at his back—he never troubles himself to ascertain who was the transgressor ; but rushing to the person nearest to him, bestows on such person, man or woman, without any deference to rank, what Dr. Chal-

mers would call the *demonstration* of a terrible blow.

It is a strange characteristic in Tam's history, and for which we cannot account, that, though he cannot read a single word correctly, he has so strong an inclination for wading through books, that he will sit at the door in the coldest day of winter for five or six hours at a time, poring over the pages of anything that has the appearance of print—it matters not whether the characters be English, Greek, Arabic, or Hebrew.

Then as to pronunciation, Tam is perfectly original. I was a pupil of his in this branch of education for several years. I used to spell, letter by letter, any word I wished Tam to pronounce, and then he favoured me with his idea of the manner in which it ought to be enunciated. The word reflections he pronounces "roultoul-foulcheness;" the word Thomas, "Touchetou-cheomase," and so on.

Pension day is always a glorious era in Tam's history. When the money is deposited in his hand, the first thing he does is to quaff as much "mountain dew" as will send him "half seas

over," and then he deals largely in threepenny "ankerstocks" (loaves) "sweet collops," tea, sugar, &c., &c. Some years ago, when the quartern loaf was selling at sixpence, Tam took it into his head, one pension day, to purchase a "twelvepenny scale" (a shilling loaf) the colossal dimensions of which will be easily imagined by the reader. According to use and wont, he carried it down the street in one hand, holding it by one of its extremities. Just as he was passing the Shambles Wynd, a large hungry mastiff, belonging to a butcher, seized the lower end of the huge loaf in his tusks, upon which Tam, wheeling round with his usual alacrity, wrenched the "ankerstock" from Tiger's mouth, and inflicted with it such a tremendous blow on the cranium of the poor animal, as made him dance to the tune of heels over heads.

I could pursue the subject of my "Juvenile Recollections" farther, but forbear for the present. Should they be relished by my readers, an additional supply will be forthcoming when I again appear in the capacity of author.

MY SCHOOL-BOY COMPANIONS.

Those who have felt any interest in the preceding, will perhaps be desirous of knowing something of the future fortunes of those who were my principal associates in my younger years. For the information of such persons the following sketches are subjoined.

Jonathan Jerusalem was the first little gentleman with whom I recollect to have formed what is called a regular acquaintanceship. The only quality for which he was celebrated at the mathematical school, was that of not being able to "work his questions;" and the little progress he made in arithmetic was not in *propria persona*, but by proxy. To be sure, when the problems were solved for him, he could transcribe the figures on his own slate from that of another, and then could walk up to the Dominie and ex-

hibit the same; but in all this he was a mere machine: he knew nothing more of the subject than if the figures on his slate had been so many Chinese characters. Our intimacy commenced through his employing me to work one or two questions for him. This was in the month of August in a particular year, and as his parents possessed an excellent garden, I promised to be his most obedient servant on any emergency on condition that certain of its contents should be occasionally forthcoming. The terms were readily agreed to; and as I was as eminent among my schoolfellows for the dexterity with which I could masticate sundry descriptions of vegetables, as I was for solving problems, Jonathan came daily to school with his pockets surcharged with gooseberries, green peas, carrots, turnips, &c., &c., for my special use. I am not even yet exactly certain whether I was most in love with Jonathan himself, or with the contents of his father's garden; but this much is matter of fact, that I was particularly fond of his company, and continued to be very frequently in it.

But it is with Jonathan after he had left

school, and not when *at* school, that I am at present concerned. Had he been a youth of quick parts his parents in all probability would have brought him up for one of the learned professions—most probably for the church. As it was, they purchased a commission for him in the army, which he entered in the year 1800. The place he was first stationed at was Limerick, in Ireland, where he resided for three years. He was an inveterate gallant, and in that short time fought no fewer than five duels, all arising out of quarrels connected with his attentions to the fair sex. In the fifth one he received a wound of which he expired on the following day. Such was the termination of *his* career.

Anthony Burgess was a tall and extremely personable youth, and an excellent scholar withal when he left school. In his eighteenth year he was articled to an attorney; and in his twenty-third, he repaired to London to fill a situation provided for him there. I was residing in the metropolis at the time, and was the very first individual on whom he called immediately on his arrival. For six months we were nearly as inti-

mate together in London, as when at school. About the end of that time, he called on me at eight o'clock one evening, and after a little conversation in the usual way, he made a short pause, and then looking at me somewhat significantly, asked if I had heard of anything within this day or two.

"Nothing of particular importance," I replied.

"Why, then," said Anthony, "do you know I am going to get married to-morrow?"

"Married!" exclaimed I, greatly surprised that one in his circumstances would have dreamed of such a step.

"It is a fact; and you may depend on it," he added.

"And what may be your bride's name?" I inquired.

"The lady is Miss Eliza Simpson, a rich heiress," he rejoined,—and a smile of self-complacency played on his countenance while he gave utterance to the words.

"I would have apprized you of the fact before now," he added, "but the young lady herself expressly requested me to conceal our betrothals

till the very last, as her friends were most solicitous that she should accept of the hand of another suitor, and would, most probably, from their partialities for him, endeavour by all means, if they knew how circumstances stood, to prevent the consummation of our nuptials. After this apology—an admissible one I hope—for concealing from you until now my views on so important a subject, may I beg the favour of your company to witness the marriage ceremony to-morrow?”

I believe I stammered out that I should gladly do myself that pleasure ; but a certain misgiving instantly came over me that my friend had been *done* by some artful female. Still, this was only conjecture, not certainty ; and notwithstanding our intimacy together, I felt a degree of delicacy in such a case which prevented me from putting any direct questions to him on the subject.

Next day came ; but in the course of the night I had been taken so seriously ill as to be incapacitated from rising out of bed for several days thereafter. On the important morning, I dispatched a messenger to Anthony’s lodgings re-

greeting it would be entirely out of my power to be present in Whitechapel Church on the interesting occasion about which we had conversed last night, and mentioning at the same time the causes which kept me at home.

Two or three days elapsed, and I was much surprised at not seeing or hearing from my friend; and in order to ascertain whether or not the marriage ceremony had been performed, I wrote to the clergyman of that church, with whom I happened to have a slight acquaintance. His answer was, that Anthony *was* married at the specified time.

I afterwards made repeated endeavours to ascertain what became of Mr. and Mrs. Burgess; but without effect. No fewer than five years had elapsed, and I had heard not a syllable regarding either.

About the end of that time, as I was one evening, in the twilight, proceeding down Gracechurch Street, on my way to the Borough, a ragged-looking young man accosted me with "Please buy some oranges, Sir,"—holding in his hand a basket containing a dozen or two of

these yellow commodities. It struck me on the instant, that the voice and features of the speaker had been once familiar to me; and I accordingly made an involuntary pause. The orange-vender looked into my face as if he too had had some vague idea of my identity; and then all of a sudden he drew back, as if about to dart out of my sight. A consciousness now flashed on my mind that the person who had thus accosted me was my old friend Anthony. I seized him by the hand as he was about hastily to depart, uttering in confused accents the half-absurd exclamation of "Oh, is this *you*?" "It is," he replied, in a rather subdued and sorrowful tone of voice, at the same time shaking me by the hand, and inquiring how I was. I thought no more of my business that night, but asked him to accompany me to my place of residence. He did so, though evidently with reluctance. With considerable difficulty I wormed out of him an outline of his history from our parting on the evening preceding his wedding-day, until our present meeting. My apprehensions relative to the character and circumstances of his bride were but too true.

She had been under the "protection" of a gentleman, as the phrase goes, for several years, and had been "cast off" only two or three months prior to his first interview with her. And, instead of being a rich heiress, as she had represented herself to him, she was greatly in arrears in various quarters. Anthony was apprised of this three days after the marriage; but then the intelligence was three days too late. On the following week he was arrested and imprisoned for part of her debts. As a matter of course he lost his situation. A separation between him and his wife was the consequence of the mortifying discoveries he had made. On his liberation from prison he endeavoured to procure another situation; but without effect. And as a last resource he betook himself to several of the lowest methods by which a miserable subsistence is earned in the metropolis. A consciousness of the imprudency of the connexion he had formed, so affected his mind, that he could not endure the idea of meeting with any of his former friends. I intimated to him that I would make it my first employment on the following day to endeavour to

do something for him; and for that purpose asked him to meet me at a certain hour that evening. He promised he would do so; but I have never heard from him since.

Gilbert Mathieson, though brought up from his earlier years with a view to the church, was one of the most sprightly little fellows at our Elgin Academy; on which account he was one of my greatest favourites. Many were the "tricks," as our parents phrased them, in which he and I were concerned together. Our intimacy was kept up until he returned from Divinity Hall, and had his mouth opened; and, so far as human probability might be depended on, that intimacy would have met with no interruption, but for the circumstance, that in our twenty-second year—we were both of the same age—affairs imposed on me the necessity of leaving the "gude town" for another country.

In the latter eighteen months of our acquaintance, Gilbert had become a great ladies' man—paid, in short, fully as much attention, if not more, to the fair sex, as he did to the Fathers. He was, moreover, the most fastidious person in

his opinions touching the "best and fairest of creation's works," that ever I knew. Miss So-and-So had a score of defects in her features; Miss That's figure was a living satire on self and friends; and Miss This was blemishes all over. Often have I queried him in regard to his opinions on the subject of beauty; but could never extract any other answer from him, than that he would answer that question when he got married, by simply pointing to his spouse. On returning to the scenes of my nativity, after an absence of several years, circumstances rendered it necessary that I should pass on foot through the parish of D——, in the county of Aberdeen. In the neighbourhood of the manse, I observed a man with his coat doffed, gathering stones on a field, and depositing them in a cart.

"Pray," said I, "can you inform me who is the clergyman of this parish?"

"His name, Sir, is Gilbert Mathieson," was the answer of the laborious man, scarcely deigning, in the plenitude of his attention to the stones, to raise his head or bestow a glance on me as he spoke.

“Gilbert Mathieson !” I exclaimed, recollecting my former acquaintance of that name. “Can you inform me,” I resumed, “to what part of the country Mr. Mathieson belongs?”

Apparently struck with the interest I evinced in the clergyman, he ceased to gather stones, and resuming an erect position, looked me fairly in the face. We recognized each other in an instant; the person I had taken for a farm-servant, was none other than my old friend Mr. Gilbert Mathieson, now the clergyman of the parish in which we then stood.

The reader needs not to be informed that in compliance with a pressing invitation, I proceeded with Gilbert to the manse. We were at the time we had so unexpectedly met together, on what the country people call the wrong or back part of the manse, and in journeying towards the front door we had to proceed in the vicinity of a pig-stye. In passing the abode of their swinships, I observed a young woman whom, from the aspect of her wardrobe and the nature of her then occupation, I would have set down as a dairy-maid, busily employed in feeding, and scolding at

the same time, some five or six grumphies. I was, as a matter of course, in the act of passing her by without dreaming of taking any special notice of her, when to my indescribable amazement—the words broke on my ear, “*This* is Mrs. Mathieson,” pointing at the same time to the feeder of the pigs. “Here is my friend Mr. —,” Mr. M. added, addressing himself to Mrs. Mathieson. The words had scarcely passed the portals of his mouth, when Mrs. Mathieson extricating her right arm from a huge bucket brim-full of the most miscellaneous assortment of pigs’ meat mortal eye ever beheld, and which she was in the act of mixing at the time,—held out her hand to me with a very considerable quantity of the oatmeal grits she had been preparing for the pigs, still adhering to it. Not choosing to have my fist contaminated, in present circumstances, with hers, I, with a presence of mind of which I can seldom boast, seized Mrs. Mathieson’s left hand, which, though it would have admitted of a slight improvement by the simple application of a little water, was by no means in the same condition as her right one. My reverend friend and his lady

made some two three dozen apologies for the unprepared state in which I had found them; after which we adjourned to the manse. Its internal economy I will not attempt to describe; that would be a subject for the most descriptive pen that ever dipped in ink; it constituted an admirable illustration of the idea conveyed by the term chaos.

I spent several hours in the house of my old friend Gilbert; and certainly in so far as the rites of hospitality were concerned, had every reason to be satisfied. I could not help, however, ruminating on the strange vicissitudes which had taken place in the fortunes of my friend in so far as his opinions on dress and manners were concerned; and but for an apprehension that I might thereby have hurt his feelings, I should have privately asked him, pointing to Mrs. Mathieson, whether *she* was intended as an exemplification of his ideas of the beautiful in woman.

Gilbert's spouse was immeasurably below mediocrity in the article of features; in person she was under the middle stature, and her figure was *a la* hogshead.

A lengthened detail of Gilbert's love adventures since I had parted from him some years previously, was furnished me by an old acquaintance soon after I reached the roof of my parents. As he was more distinguished for his proficiency in the science of dandyism than in that of theology, and made it "the end and aim" of his being to extend the circle of his acquaintance as much as possible among "the sex," he succeeded in forming an intimacy with many beautiful and accomplished *belles*—with several of the most beautiful and accomplished ladies, in fact, in the town and neighbourhood. When, however, he had procured a snug manse, and begun to form serious thoughts of entering into the matrimonial state, he found that the number of his female acquaintances proved an evil instead of a blessing; for where so many were amiable and handsome, and good, he felt the difficulty of selection; and flitted for some time from one to another, until those who were most admired by him in the first instance, were either unexpectedly wrested from him by some less wavering suitor, or despising him for his fickleness, at length discountenanced his ad-

dresses. It was the general opinion among those most intimately acquainted with him, that, under the impression he would thereby inflict a severe punishment on an accomplished and beautiful lady, who, in consequence of his mutability, had "put a period" to her intimacy with him, he had all of a sudden rushed into matrimony with Miss Charlotte Clumsey.

Shortly after his marriage, and as if deeply chagrined at the folly of his conduct in love matters, he began practically to abandon his dandy notions, and for the sake of conformity with the habits of Mrs. Mathieson, got quite slovenly in his person, and assisted in the more laborious duties connected with the glebe.

Roderick Rathbone was another of my most intimate school-boy companions, and was the most adventurous and high-spirited boy I ever knew. He was excessively attached, from the time he was first capable of thinking on any subject, to everything connected with the sea; and about the fourteenth year of his age he mentioned to his parents that he was desirous, when sufficiently far advanced in his education, of devoting

himself to a sea-faring life. Being, however, an only son, and being, moreover, heir to a considerable patrimony, his parents endeavoured by every means in their power to induce him to abandon his intention. At length perceiving their determination on the subject, he appeared for some months to have abandoned his first wishes on the subject. The desire, however, was only concealed, not extinguished. In his fifteenth year, he, unknown to his parents, abruptly left their roof and proceeded to Aberdeen, whence he made his way to Plymouth, and there got on board a man-of-war.

The next time his parents heard of him was two or three years thereafter, at which time he was in South America. Several years again passed away without their receiving any intelligence of him. In 1812, I was in London, and while one day engaged in business in a tavern in the Minories, I overheard two sailors conversing over a pot of beer, on some of their naval adventures.

"There was not a better 'hearty' among the whole crew than Roderick Rathbone, the Scotchman," observed one of the jolly tars.

"He was, indeed, an excellent fellow," remarked the other.

It struck me on the instant, that my old schoolfellow was the subject of the two sailors' conversation.

"Pray, lads," interrupted I, "to what part of the country did the person you speak of belong; as a good many years ago I knew a young man of the same name?"

"To a place he called Morayshire," was the answer.

"It is the identical person," exclaimed I, with an energy of expression and an animation of countenance to which I am by no means accustomed.

"And can you inform me what has become of him?" I continued, with an intensity of feeling which will be readily imagined by those who have suddenly heard of a favourite acquaintance of whom they had never expected to receive any farther accounts in this world.

"We can," replied one of the sailors, with that indifference or dryness of manner characteristic of the class to which he belonged.

"Do you know in what place he *now* is?" I added.

"We do," was the laconic answer of the same person.

"And in what particular place may he be?" was my next interrogatory.

"He is not two miles distant from this spot," replied the second seaman.

Oh, how my heart beat with exultation at this remark! I already imagined myself in company with the light-hearted Roderick; and burning with impatience to be so in reality, I put the concluding question, "And pray, my lads, *where* may he be?"

"Well, Sir, since you will have it, he is in Stepney church-yard."

Those who have had their fondest and most sanguine hopes in an instant annihilated, can alone form any conception of the nature of my feelings as these words broke on my ear. And the poignancy of those feelings was still more deepened, when I was informed that only eight days had elapsed since he arrived in the Thames from Africa, in perfect health. About two days

thereafter he was suddenly taken ill at noon, and died on the following morning. He was interred the day prior to my accidental interview with his late fellow-sailors. He intended on the very day on which he died to have left London for Morayshire, with the view of henceforth residing in that part of the country.

Joseph Jackson was another of my principal companions when at school, and I feel a pride and pleasure in ruminating on his history after he left the academy. His parents were then in comparatively indigent circumstances, and could only maintain him at school by suffering themselves many a privation of which a heedless world knew nothing. The sacrifices, however, to which they submitted in order that he might have the benefit of a liberal education, were not made in vain. He was most indefatigable in his application to his studies; which with an inherent aptitude to learn, enabled him to make remarkably rapid progress in them. He, moreover, conducted himself in every respect, out of school as well as in it, with the greatest propriety. The Latin Master of the Academy mentioned

these circumstances to a gentleman in the place recently returned from India; and the consequence was, that against the time Joseph's education was finished, the former procured a lucrative situation for him in the East. In the year 18— he left Morayshire for India, reached the place of his destination in less than six months, and by the time he had been six years in that quarter of the world, was enabled to remit £100 to his parents, which sum he has since continued annually. By his good conduct and intellectual acquirements, he speedily raised himself to a station of great eminence in our Indian Government; and is now understood to be in a fair way, if health be spared him, of speedily making a princely fortune.

Thomas Thomson was another of my greatest intimates at school. Like myself he had an unconquerable predilection for bathing, leaping ditches, dykes, and hedges, and climbing what we called difficult trees, dilapidated buildings, &c. Many were the excursions through the country on which he and I set out together, with a view to the gratification of our propensities for

such feats. In the season of spring, the woods of Gordonstown were a favourite place of resort. So plentiful were crows' nests in this place, that we have repeatedly counted more than thirty in one tree; and when we had succeeded in climbing any of those trees which had baffled the ingenuity and enterprise of other boys, I have known us "harry" nearly the above number of nests before we descended. But I am digressing. Thomas, after he had finished his academical career, engaged as midshipman on board an East Indiaman. We parted together—he in the highest spirits—on the 15th October 18—. He reached London in seven days thereafter, and early in the following month he sailed from the Thames for Calcutta; but ere the vessel had proceeded five hundred miles on her voyage, she was overtaken by a tremendous hurricane, which in less than two hours made her a total wreck. Only six individuals of the great number on board, escaped with their lives; but poor young Thomas was not among the saved. He indeed swam a considerable distance; but nature became exhausted; and he was seen by one of the six

survivors, to sink for ever at about fifty yards' distance from him.

Such is an outline of the history of some of my most intimate school-boy companions. In regard to others it may suffice to speak in more general terms. Several of them—with painful feelings do I write it—have long since disappeared from this terrestrial scene. Others are scattered through the four quarters of the world, and many of them—with gladness of heart do I mention the circumstance—are located in the same place as myself, and are still the valued companions of my leisure hours.

NOTES ON THE NEWSPAPERS.

THE public journals are a most fruitful source of amusement, even when read in the most cursory manner. If carefully perused and reflected on, they are found to be generally pregnant with instruction as well as amusement. I sometimes devote a spare half-hour to the consideration of those less obvious points which are indicated by particular paragraphs. The present article consists of observations made on the leading newspapers at different times. The incidents or events referred to will, in most cases, be a guide to the dates at which the various "Notes" were written.

DIVERSITY OF TASTES.

"THERE is no accounting for tastes," says the proverb. Undoubtedly there is not. One meets with people of singular tastes in jostling through

this wondrous world. Not the least curious of those which have lately come under our notice is that of a poor beggar woman, who follows the judges barefooted in their circuit. The following is the way in which the fact was stated in the "Standard" a few evenings ago:—

"The beggar woman, who has for several years walked the Oxford circuit barefooted, following the route of the judges from place to place, as their Lordships go to hold the assizes, is now on that circuit as usual."

What attraction huge powdered wigs and countenances remarkable only for their gravity, can have in the eyes of this poor woman, is more than we can tell. But this we know, that to some people there is not a more unpleasant spectacle in the world. The very idea of a judge, conjures up reflections in some men's minds—aye, and in some women's too—which are the reverse of agreeable. Instead of following them about from place to place, as this poor woman does, it is no uncommon thing to hear of people not only recoiling at the bare idea of meeting a judge, but suddenly fleeing across the

Atlantic to avoid the unpleasant intercourse. How wretched in the estimation of a certain class of people at the antipodes must be the taste of this female mendicant !

RELEASE OF A PRISONER.

THE following paragraph appears in a country journal :—" A toad, imbedded in an apparently solid mass of stone, was discovered last September, in a field at W., to the utter horror of the operator, when the shivered block disclosed its unsightly inmate. The creature, thus instantaneously restored to light and life, hopped vigorously away before the momentary surprise had been surmounted; and, being hotly pursued by a dog which was standing near, it escaped beyond recovery into the long grass and weeds of the neighbouring hedge."

This paragraph is altogether one of the most unique which has met our eye for some time. The circumstances connected with the discovery of the toad are elaborately described. The only

thing we dislike about it is, that which represents the discovery to have taken place "in a field near W." Rather than have seen this same "W." in its present position, we could have wished there had been no such letter in the alphabet. What we are apprehensive of is, that sticking in the letter where it now stands, will have the effect of throwing discredit in some people's minds, on the whole statement, though we ourselves most potently believe every particle of it. Why could not the writer have named at once the place hinted at by the "W?" Had it been a case of *crim. con.*, instead of the liberation of a toad from prison, he could not have been more cautious lest he should commit himself. How or when his toadship was put into confinement, nobody can tell, because nobody knows. Possibly (and here we speak with sober seriousness) the poor creature may have been shut up in its little stony cell since the time of Adam. In that case, with what strange personages of the biped creation, has it been contemporary! What important events have taken place in its day! Empires have

risen and fallen, and the world has been, in one sense, turned upside down, while it has been cooped up in its little rocky abode. And yet it has known nothing of the changes which have occurred, or the events which have taken place. But a truce to moralization; for if the temptation presented in this case to indulge in it were not resisted in the outset, there is no saying when or where it would end. "The creature," says the writer, "thus instantaneously restored to light and life, hopped vigorously away." How does he know that it was restored to life? That would imply it had been dead, which he has no ground for assuming. We see no right he has to assume that it was even asleep during its lengthened imprisonment. That "it hopped vigorously away," was not to be wondered at, after undergoing so protracted a confinement. We are sorry "it escaped beyond recovery into the long grass and weeds of the neighbouring hedge," because we should like to have paid some attention to its future history. However, we cannot blame it for escaping, when we are informed "it was

hotly pursued by a dog which was standing near." Had we been "standing near," we would have "hotly pursued" the dog, and in the event of overtaking him, would have given him a sound beating; for what right, we should like to know, had he, or any other member of the "bow-wow" fraternity, hotly to pursue this poor toad on its liberation, after a confinement, possibly, of five or six thousand years? It might at least have had breathing time allowed it before it was subjected to any such molestation. The man who had been confined forty-eight years in the Bastile, was no sooner liberated than he wished to be again taken back to his dungeon: this unfortunate creature must have participated in his wish, when it had no sooner been restored to the light of day, than it was "hotly pursued by a dog."

THE PUBLIC—A SINGULAR THEFT.

It appears from the Bath Journals that a very animated and angry discussion has taken place among the Town Council of that city relative to

some new church. We have not been able to master the details; but one gentleman proves very clearly that some sad misdoings have been going on. Hear what he says:—

“The public have been wronged in this new church. I myself have had a vault taken away.”

The public, everybody knows, is a greatly injured personage. At least we daily hear of the wrongs which he is doomed to endure. To be sure, he often gets credit for being a sufferer when he is not, and has our warmest sympathies when he has no claim to them; for certain people have got an awkward custom of identifying their own individual injuries, fancied or real, with those of Mr. Public. We by no means affirm that such is the case when the town councillor of Bath says, “The public have been wronged in the new church;” but we must confess it does look somewhat like it, when he adds in the same breath, “I myself have had a vault taken away.” Some persons have not only a strong penchant for felony; but the articles they steal are sometimes of a very curious kind. We have heard of persons whose acquisitive propensities were such,

that when there was nothing else within their reach, they would steal a coffin. This, however, is the first instance which has come under our notice of anyone stealing a vault! We marvel how the thief managed to carry it away. We recollect a case in which, when an old gentleman's gouty shoes were stolen, the sufferer remarked, that all the punishment he wished the rascal who had taken them was, that they might *fit* him. We think the member of the Town Council of Bath, who has had his vault taken away, may be reconciled to his loss in the hope that "the rascal of a thief" may soon find use for it.

YANKEE CONTROVERSY.

Who that has ever seen an American newspaper, has not been amused by the rich abuse which the editors heap on each other, when they happen to fall into controversy? Cobbett was a mere novice in the art of vituperation when compared with Jonathan. A few days since we promised ourselves a rich exhibition of the kind

from two letters, written by Americans, which appeared in a morning paper; but one of the controversialists marred the sport by a premature retirement from the field. The aggressor in this case, speaking of the alleged bad taste of Mr. Jones, the American actor, in getting up the late meeting in Freemasons' Tavern, to express sympathy with those who are sufferers by the recent fire at New York, happened to say, "I am sure the views of Mr. Jones do not accord with those of the citizens of New York, with whom he can be but very little acquainted." One would have thought that this phraseology was sufficiently measured. Not so, thinks Mr. Jones. After saying that the object of the meeting was to express "sympathy for the late *conflagration* at New York" (for the *sufferers* by the late conflagration, we presume he means), Mr. Jones waxes wondrously indignant and grandiloquent, and thus apostrophises his assailant:—

"You really, Sir, take a great responsibility on yourself in making this assertion; for it is founded in total ignorance, if not falsehood. My knowledge of the American character arises

not from an airy vision, but from the reality of experience. If," he adds, "I am very little acquainted with the citizens of New York, where is my feeling of gratitude to that community for their liberal patronage of my histrionic endeavours, for four successive years, in the national theatre of that city? Allow me to ask, which of *us* is best qualified to dilate on the American character; the person (perhaps) who has passed his days behind a shopboard, or that man who has been nightly before a generous public?"

The adroitness with which Mr. Jones here introduces the affairs of the shop, is only equalled by that with which he aims a thrust at his adversary, by insinuating that he is a merchant or clerk. Mr. Jones continues the same indignant apostrophe. "I trust, if you are an American, that no shame compels you to conceal your name beneath the mask of secrecy and hypocrisy. 'There,' as the boys in the street say, 'there, take that 'you person' (perhaps) who have passed your days behind a shopboard.'"

Sir William Draper was not a whit more severe or indignant when he stigmatised Junius as

an "anonymous slanderer," and dared him to come forth and throw off his mask.

The "person" who has thus very innocently and unconsciously, we have no doubt, called forth Mr. Jones's ire, dates his letter from "Pearl-street," and the tragedian leaps at once to the conclusion that, *ergo*, he "must be either a merchant, or perhaps, a clerk." We say nothing of the infinite superiority which the tragedian here assumes for the histrionic profession over the business of a merchant or clerk. What we are anxious to know is, in the first place, what is the geography in our metropolitan world of this same "Pearl-street;" for we were ignorant of the existence of such a street? And secondly, whether any other persons than merchants or clerks reside in it? It is only in the negative case that Mr. Jones is entitled to credit for his logical acquirements. Mr. Jones's epistle seems to have frightened his adversary out of his propriety, for we have heard nothing of him since. We regret this; for if only half-a-dozen letters had passed between the belligerents, they would inevitably have become so abusive, as to afford the British public rare sport.

ANTI-MALTHUSIANS.

THE northern Belgians, it appears, are no disciples of the late Mr. Malthus. They bid fair to beat the Irish themselves in the science of infant propagation. See the following paragraph, which appears in in the daily papers:—

“In the year 1834, there were born in the Northern Netherlands 87,800 children; the deaths were 68,484; the marriages were 21,281.”

Of the preponderance of the births over the deaths we say nothing, though there is room for a remark or two on that point. What we are anxious to know is, how it happens that where there are only 21,281 marriages per annum, there should be 87,802 births? Dominie Sampson would have held up his hands and exclaimed “Prodigious!” with a special emphasis, at such a statement. In most European countries, Ireland excepted, the average interval of births in families (making due allowances for those instances in which no children result from marriage) is two years. In the Northern Nether-

lands, if the above statement be correct, the average interval of births in the matrimonial state must be much shorter, even on the supposition, which, for the sake of Belgian morality we are unwilling to make, that an unusual sprinkling of the children are born out of wedlock.

SUSPICIOUS PERSONS.

THE following advertisement appears in a Hobart Town paper :—

“ Found, on a suspicious person, two remarkably fine bullocks.”

We do not exactly see how this couple of “remarkably fine bullocks” could have been found *on* any person, whether suspicious or otherwise. But let that pass. What we should like to know is, whether there be any test, and if so, what the test is in Hobart Town, by which the question whether a man be suspicious or not, is to be decided? The great criterion of respectability is held by some people in this country, to be the circumstance of one’s keeping a gig.

This, as mentioned in a former article, was seriously stated by a witness in the course of his examination in a court of law. No matter though whole families may have been ruined by some fashionable swindler, so long as he manages to keep a gig he is respectable. What constitutes a "suspicious" appearance in Hobart Town, and consequently exposes one to the risk of having his "remarkably fine bullocks," or any other property he may chance to possess, taken from him, we know not. Possibly, if he have "a shocking bad hat," or be but indifferently attired, or chance to have a long beard, he may, according to the sapient legislation of that place, be a very fit subject of suspicion. That "suspicious" characters are as plentiful as blackberries, in that part of the world, we can well believe; indeed, we "suspect" the records of the Old Bailey, if carefully examined, would afford presumptive evidence of the fact. But the question still recurs—What are the recognised symptoms of being "suspicious" in that place? It is important we should know this before we make up our minds to emigrate thither. It is no joke to have oneself branded in a public

journal as a "suspicious" person, in addition to one's "bullocks" or other property being taken from him.

ECONOMY OF THE PUBLIC MONEY.

ECONOMY of the public money, it is gratifying to perceive, is now the order of the day, in high as well as in low places. Two magistrates, members of one of the reformed town councils in Scotland, sometime ago walked on foot a distance of twelve miles on the business of the "gude town," and though they were absent from their homes the whole of the day, they only "consumed" a gill of whisky, price threepence halfpenny, and masticated two biscuits, price one penny each, which, with a penny to the waiter, amounted altogether to the sum of sixpence-halfpenny. This account against the borough was no sooner presented than the treasurer was authorized by the Council to pay it. The payment of the sum so incurred for this specimen of gastronomical moderation, was accompanied by a unanimous vote of thanks.

And well might the Town Council reward the abstinence of the two gentlemen with this expression of its sense of their rigid economy; for on every occasion on which a similar visit, under the close burgh regime, was paid to the same place, the expenses, between coach hire, eating and drinking, and "incidentals," amounted, on an average, to nearly as many pounds as there were pennies in this case. Whether the economy of the public money, which is now beginning to be manifested in high places, is to be ascribed to the Scotch Town Council to which I have referred,—is a point on which I am not in a condition to express an opinion. It ought to suffice the public to know the fact, that not only a disposition but a determination to economize the public money, is now visible in all quarters. A morning paper, which is most exemplary in its attention to all such matters, contained, a few days since, the following paragraph:—

"The daily papers read by the Judges in Westminster Hall, are now *hired* out, not purchased, from considerations of economy."

This is exactly as it should be: one only wishes it had been a little sooner: however, better late than never. The same regard for the economical use of the public money is fully entertained by her majesty's ministers. It is not long since they unanimously resolved to discontinue taking in, which had been done from time immemorial, the daily papers, with one exception, which it is unnecessary to name. That one, it is understood, serves all the members of the Cabinet. "Figaro in London," price one penny weekly; and the "Weekly Visitor," price one halfpenny, have also had the doors of the government offices shut against them for the same reason. It is said, that in the true spirit of this rigid economy of the public money, all the members of the government, from the highest minister of state down to the occupant of the most humble situation, are to find their own ink, pens, and paper, in all matters pertaining to public business, and that farthing candles only are to be henceforth used in either house of parliament. Great doings are in this way expected to be promised in Mr. Spring Rice's next budget.

CLERICAL ZEAL FOR RELIGION.

A CORRESPONDENT of the "Examiner," of Sunday the 20th ultimo, mentions, that in one of the parishes in Ireland, in which the disputes between the Protestant and Roman Catholic religions run high, a poor man belonging to the former, having lately been taken so ill as to be deemed by himself and all who saw him, nigh unto death, sent for the Protestant clergyman—a doctor in divinity, it is said—on whose ministrations he was in the habit of attending, earnestly desirous of some conversation with him, respecting his prospects for eternity before he received his final summons. The Protestant D. D., in answer to the application, said he could not comply with the supposed dying man's wishes, because he lived in a marshy part of the parish, which would prevent either his (the clergyman's) carriage driving up to the door, or himself entering it without wetting his feet. The poor man, in the agony of his mental distress regarding his condition in the sight of Him whom he every moment expected to be his judge, then sent for

a Roman Catholic priest. The latter complied with his wishes without a moment's delay. He administered such spiritual consolation to the poor man as the doctrines of his church permitted; and prescribed such medicines for his bodily indisposition as had the effect, in a few weeks, of restoring him to perfect health. On his recovery the poor man at once abjured Protestantism, and threw himself into the arms of the Catholic church. What a painful contrast to the mind of every true Protestant does the conduct of this Church of England divine exhibit to that of the Roman Catholic priest! The clergyman—the Protestant doctor of divinity—balances the inconvenience of wet feet against the probable salvation of an immortal soul! Rather than incur the risk of wetting his feet, he will allow a human being to writhe under the unutterable horrors of an awakened conscience, and run the hazard of everlasting perdition. And this is probably one of the “Irish clergy” on behalf of whom such pressing appeals have been so often made to the pockets of the British public! How shocking to think that one who regards the

eternal salvation of a fellow-being as a matter of much less importance than keeping his own feet dry during the fifteen or twenty minutes the visit might have required of his time, should, when entering on his pastoral office, have solemnly declared that, in taking that office on him, he was moved by the Holy Ghost ! Verily, with such a clergy, it is no wonder that Ireland should remain Catholic: the marvel is that there are any Protestants in it at all: we mean Protestants from principle—Protestants whose worldly interest does not lie in their being so. If Ireland be not Protestantized until it be effected by the agency of such men as the present clergy, we fear there is little chance of any person of the present day living to witness such a consummation, even should he attain the good old age of Methuselah.

YANKEE AND DUTCH ADVERTISING.

MOST Englishmen are amused with the specimens of American advertising, which occasionally

come under their eye. The following is not amiss :—

“Anthony Macdonald teaches boys and girls their grammar tongue; also, geography, terrestrial and celestial. Old hats made as good as new.”

There can be no question that if Anthony is able to perform all that he here covenants to accomplish, he is a universal genius. No man not possessing the most versatile talents, could unite in his own person the somewhat heterogeneous qualifications requisite for teaching “boys and girls their *grammar tongue*, also geography, terrestrial and *celestial* ;” and making “old hats as good as new.” To be instructed in “*celestial* geography,” by which Anthony, we suppose, means the geography of the heavens; generally called by other people *astronomy*,—must be a very great matter: but as the world goes, especially in Jonathan’s land, we shrewdly suspect, that if Anthony can actually, according to promise, make “old hats as good as new,” he is likely to drive a somewhat brisker and more profitable business that way, than in teaching the young idea how to shoot; the Americans being notori-

ous for their "shocking bad hats." The Dutch are beginning to vie with the Americans in the article of original advertisements. A short time ago one of Dutch manufacture—and the production of a woman too—came under my observation, and struck me as being extremely happy of its kind. Here it is, and let the reader judge of its merits for himself:—

"Van Roorst died on the 15th instant. He was the best of husbands, and his relict is inconsolable at her loss. God rest his soul in peace, is the earnest prayer of his deeply-afflicted widow, who will, as usual, continue to supply her friends with the best articles in the grocery and cheese-mongery line, at the most reasonable terms."

Here an ardent affection for the "dear departed," is most ingeniously blended with the affairs of the shop. In England, we cannot manage matters in this fashion. If a woman be inconsolable for the death of her husband,—which every woman ought to be, especially if, as in this case, he were "the best of husbands,"—she very foolishly forgets everything else in the extremity of her affliction. In Holland, the

deepest regret for a deceased partner in life is perfectly compatible with a due regard to the pounds, shillings, and pence matters of the shop. There the inconsolable widow, even when in the depths of her distress, never for one moment, if in the "grocery and cheesemongery line,"—or, we suppose, in any other line—forgets that she has "articles" to vend "at the most reasonable terms;" and in notifying to her friends the decease of her husband, she takes care to intimate the latter fact also. Sorrow and business; the grave and the shop, are here blended together with a felicity peculiar to the "inconsolable" widows of Holland.

EXECUTION OF FIESCHI.

FIESCHI has paid the penalty of the law: his head was chopped off on the 20th. He kept his word as to the manner of his dying; that is to say, he died, according to his own acceptance of the term, a hero! In other words, he died as he had lived—a brute. A more melancholy in-

sensibility to the crimes he had committed, or to his destiny in a future state, was never exhibited. No mark of contrition for his guilt escaped him; no fear of futurity seems to have had a moment's existence in his mind. And yet none of the French journals even hint a word of regret or disapprobation at the frightful spectacle of a fellow-creature, stained with the most atrocious crimes, thus rushing recklessly into the presence of the Supreme Being. There can be no question that this tacit approval of such brutal indifference to death on a public scaffold, has a most injurious effect on the myriads who witness the spectacle, and the millions who read the accounts of it. The ignorant multitude are taught to look on a person dying under such circumstances, and having everything he says and does carefully chronicled, without a single expression of disgust, as if he were the most illustrious man that ever lived. They are, indeed, led to look on such persons as a sort of deity. Were public indignation sufficiently expressed through the press, first at the crime itself, and then at the brutal indifference

which the criminal evinces both as to what he has done, and the futurity which awaits him; were he, in short, held up as one whose conduct ought only to be regarded with mingled feelings of loathing and commiseration, it would, in the first instance, operate as a preventative to such atrocities; and, in the second, it would, if any earthly consideration could, cause those who had been hurried into the commission of crime, to be ashamed of their guilt both in the sight of their Maker and their fellow-men.

AN EPISODE.

THE reader will probably recollect the story of the French Roman Catholic General, who, in the midst of his devotions, used to turn about his head to his attendants, and order heretics to be executed by the dozen. The thing was done, if I may so speak, by way of parenthesis. The French correspondent of "The Times" seems to have a somewhat similar, though happily more harmless taste for episode, or parenthesis.

In the midst of a most inflated and pathetic account of the execution of Fieschi and his accomplices, the writer turns aside from the main subject, to bestow an episodical paragraph on the Duke of Brunswick.

“On the outside of the gate, at a tavern, the Duke of Brunswick was seen at a window of the first-floor, looking over the gate on the scaffold with a spying-glass. The Noble Duke wore a fashionable great-coat of an olive green, and frequently waved about a beautiful Indian silk handkerchief. There was with him an Englishman, who was said to be a person of distinction—he was accompanied by an interpreter. They both gave sixty francs for their places.”

The minuteness of this description is remarkable. The noble duke was on “the outside of the gate,”—he was on “the first-floor,” and at a “window,” he looked through a “spying-glass,”—he “wore a fashionable great-coat,” which was of “an olive green,”—and, to crown all, he waved a “beautiful Indian silk handkerchief.”

We have seldom seen, in the same limited compass, so much descriptive matter. The writer's

powers of observation must have been very great, when, amidst the deeply-interesting scenes that were passing around him, he could do such ample justice to the noble duke. Fieschi was so ambitious of notoriety that he could "bear no rival near the throne:" it was fortunate he did not anticipate the attention paid to the Duke of Brunswick by the reporter of his execution. Had he done so, the circumstance would have been more horrible to him than the guillotine itself. We wonder how his grace will relish being thus gibbeted in the columns of "The Times," in company with Fieschi and his associates in crime!

A CONVENIENT CONSCIENCE.

A MEETING was lately held in Bungay, by certain persons calling themselves "friends of the church," for the purpose of enforcing on the refractory Dissenters in that place, the duty of paying church-rates. At this meeting, a rev.

gentleman who rejoices in a very lucrative living in the neighbourhood, in addition to the name of Tibbs, is represented by one of the provincial papers, to have held forth to the following effect:

“I maintain, it is the duty of all men to contribute to the support of whatever is the established church of the country in which they dwell. I myself, acting on this principle, cheerfully paid for the support of the Roman Catholic Church, when residing on the continent.” This rev. gentleman, according to his own showing, has a marvellously pliable conscience. He runs but little risk of ever suffering martyrdom for his principles. It is impossible, be his lot cast where it may, that he will ever find himself in a wrong position. What simpletons he must deem such men as Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and others of his own church to have been, when they suffered their heads to be chopped off on the scaffold, or their bodies to be burned at the stake, for such a trifling affair as conscience! The fires of Smithfield may be again kindled whenever religious intolerants of any denomination please: there is no danger of their ever singeing

a hair of the Rev. Mr. Tibbs' head. What matters it in so far as this enforcer of the duty of paying church-rates is concerned, whether the Mahometan religion or the Christian religion, be the established religion of the land ! In either case, he will be equally cheerful and prompt in his payment of church-rates. In Turkey, there cannot be a question, he would make a most exemplary Mussulman. Of course, if in India, he would not have the slightest scruple in contributing his share to the support of the worship of Juggernaut. The scriptures tell us, there will be a severe and deadly struggle between the true and false religion, immediately before the millenium. The late Rev. Mr. Irving died in the firm belief that the millenium is to commence in 1847. If this ornament of the church happen to live to see the struggle which is to precede the millennial advent, he will be quite safe, however others may fare. He will always be on the strongest side—always a supporter of the established church, whatever it may chance to be. What a mighty convenient thing it is to have so accommodating a conscience !

MARRYING EXTRAORDINARY.

THE following short paragraph is just now making the round of the papers:—

“A woman recently died in Italy, who had attained the advanced age of 142 years, after having eight husbands, the last of whom has survived her.”

There is so much curious matter indicated in this brief paragraph, that we wish with all our hearts, the inditer thereof had been somewhat more communicative. We wonder at what age the lady was spliced with husband the first. It would have been gratifying also to know, at what particular era of her protracted existence, she engaged at the altar to perform all the duties of wedlock to husband the eighth. As to the respective dates of the half-dozen intervening marriages, we would have made calculations ourselves, which would at least have proved satisfactory to our own minds; but the rogue who wrote the paragraph, has left us completely in the dark on the points in question. For a century at least we may safely assume, this wife of

many husbands produced but few of those "little pledges of mutual affection" which are ordinarily looked for with so much anxiety by a newly-married pair. During that time, there can be but little doubt, she had been as anti-Malthusian in practice, whatever she may have been in theory, as the most strenuous advocate of that hypothesis could wish. The paragrapher says nothing about the lady's charms. They must have been very great to have brought no fewer than eight swains into her arms, while others of the sex are unable to get one. We wonder if her attractions continued to the last? If they did, we are prepared to shed an additional tear of sympathy with the bereaved husband, now mourning in all the anguish of his soul, the death of her in whose embraces he was wont to be supremely blest. On talking to husband the last, of his predecessors in her affections and arms, we presume she must have done so as No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, and so on, to prevent any mistake as to the identity of the dear departed. The fact of the deceased having in her time wedded eight husbands, is fraught with an im-

portant moral lesson—a lesson which must especially commend itself to the female sex. Never was the blessedness of matrimony so forcibly inculcated before.

Here is a woman, who for nearly a century and a quarter—assuming, as we think we have every right to do, that she was wedded to No. 1 when in, or only just out of, her teens: here is a woman, who for this long period had experience of the married state, and found it so sweet to her taste that she died, as she had lived, in it. Had she felt it irksome, her eventful domestic career afforded her various opportunities of escaping from it for ever; but she found it so much the reverse, that as soon as she lost one husband, she made all possible haste to get united to another. Marriage is said to be a lottery; by which, we suppose, is meant the quality of the partner whom one gets. It is a lottery also with young ladies, whether they get a husband at all. The deceased had remarkable luck in the mere article of getting husbands. If she drew prizes—that is, got *good* husbands—her luck, we are confident, must have been perfectly

unprecedented in the annals of matrimony. Seriously speaking, we question whether it be just or politic in the laws of Italy, to allow one woman to have eight husbands, while so many of the sex are vegetating in celibacy; not from choice, but from necessity. It were a pity the memory of such a woman should be consigned to oblivion: the brief notice which the inditer of the paragraph we have quoted gives of her, will hardly serve to rescue her name from forgetfulness for even one little fortnight. We hope the surviving husband, when the first overwhelming emotions of sorrow have somewhat subsided, will seriously set about writing her biography, at full length: if we had the necessary materials, we would do it ourselves.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO "ACCOMPLISHED" LADIES.

ONE of the morning papers, a few days since, contained the following announcement in its advertising columns:

"Wanted a daily Governess for a young Lady,

to teach English, French, Drawing, Singing, Writing, and Arithmetic. The required hours of attendance are from eleven till four daily. Salary, £12 per annum."

Parents who move in what is called a respectable sphere of society, but whose means are so limited as to render them unable to make provision for their children when they are grown up, often stretch a point to give one or more of their daughters as much education as will render them sufficiently "accomplished," as it is technically called, to go out as governesses. Those of them who may chance to cast their eye on the above advertisement, will not congratulate themselves on the profession, if so it may be termed, which they have fixed on for their daughters. To offer such terms as a salary for the services of an educated lady, is synonymous with a regular proposal to starve her; and if there be any way of getting at the father of the young lady whom it is proposed to educate in all the above branches of learning, to the tune of five hours a-day, for £12 a-year, we would suggest to the public prosecutor the propriety of

indicting him for an attempt on the life of some unfortunate governess. It is clear the fellow never intended she should have anything to eat other than chameleon's fare. See how carefully, with this view, he specifies the hours during which she is to teach the young lady "English, French, Drawing, Singing, Writing, and Arithmetic." They are to be from eleven till four—just such hours as would prevent her presence during breakfast and dinner: for the first meal would be over before she commenced her duties, and the second would not begin until after she had finished them, and retired. The advertiser is evidently no fool; he knows it would be dangerous to have a governess in the house at meal hours, with a stomach no better furnished than it would be by a salary of £12 a-year. Why, the poor creature would not be able to find herself in tolerably decent clothes, putting washing out of the question, at the sum. And yet, ten to one, it would be a *sine qua non*, in making the engagement, that she should "go genteel." In the same paper which contains this advertisement, which must literally outrage the feelings of

every governess without a situation and without friends whose eye may chance to see it: in the same paper there is an advertisement for a housemaid, in a place where the washing is given out, and where several servants are kept, in which the wages offered are £14. Let the circumstances of the housemaid and those of the governess be compared, and then say which of the two is in the most enviable condition. The one has not those refined feelings imparted by education, and by previously moving in a respectable sphere of life; the other has. The housemaid has no appearance to keep up as regards clothes; the governess is expected to maintain the appearance of a lady: the housemaid has her meals "tied to her head;" the governess, unless she can get it through some other means, will never have a meal at all. What a miserable prospect for those young creatures who are—at a great personal sacrifice it may be on the part of their parents—fitting out for governesses, in the hope they will by that means make a livelihood! The schoolmaster, at this rate, had better stay at home; and intellect, instead of advancing, had

better remain stationary. Instead of education raising those in society who seek to make it the means of earning a respectable livelihood, it only sinks them lower in the social scale.

INGENIOUS EQUIVOCATION.

At the Middlesex Sessions, held on the 17th ultimo, a person named *Sheering* was cross-examined relative to an information he had laid against a publican, for selling beer during the hours of divine service. The following is part of the dialogue which took place on the occasion, between this person and the opposing counsel:—

Mr. Prendergast.—You have been often in this Court, I believe?

Sheering.—Yes, many times (giving a glance towards the dock).

Mr. Prendergast.—Ah, I see you are looking towards the bar.

Sheering.—Yes, I was brought up to the bar.

Mr. Prendergast.—What do you mean by that, fellow?

Sheering.—Why, I was brought up to the bar when I was drinking in the defendant's house.

Mr. Serjeant Andrews.—What did you mean when you said you were brought up to the bar?

Sheering.—Mr. Prendergast made an observation about—

Mr. Serjeant Andrews.—And you meant to have given him a pert answer?

Sheering.—No, I did not, Sir.

Mr. Serjeant Andrews.—Take care how you answer; as your answers may affect your credit with the Court.

Mr. Prendergast.—Have you never stood within that bar [pointing to the dock]?

Sheering.—Never.

Mr. Prendergast.—Do you mean to swear you were never tried in this Court?

Sheering.—No.

Mr. Prendergast.—Then what did you mean by your former answer?

Sheering.—I never stood behind that bar; it was a different one when I was tried.

Mr. Flower indignantly asked how he dared thus equivocate with his oath?

Mr. Prendergast.—What were you tried for?

Sheering.—You ought to know, for you defended me.

Mr. Prendergast.—I insist on an answer. I can't be your witness, and if I could I would not.

Sheering.—It was for rescuing a fellow-creature from the grave.

Mr. Serjeant Andrews.—Was it not for stealing a dead body?

Sheering.—Yes.

There is clearly a mistake in the destiny of this person, who is said to be a common informer. Nature obviously intended him for a lawyer; and had not some untoward affair thwarted her purposes, he would have been "brought up to the bar" in a professional sense, instead of to the bar of a public-house, or of a criminal court. In that case, he would unquestionably have raised himself to eminence. As it is, there is every probability that he will raise himself, or be raised by others, to a certain kind of eminence, though one of a very different description, before he goes out of the world. The ingenuity of the fellow's equivocation about "the

bar," could only be equalled by the cool effrontery with which he parried the questions of Mr. Prendergast. The equivocation about the old and new bar was also good, But decidedly the most ingenious of the three grand equivocations, and indeed by far the most ingenious we ever met with, was that about "rescuing a fellow-creature from the grave." It ought of itself to immortalize the fellow. This we know, that many a person has been immortalized who never said anything half so clever. When we first read his statement of having been tried for "rescuing a fellow-creature from the grave," our admiration of his humanity was only equalled by our regret, that he should ever, after so meritorious an act, have brought himself into trouble. Judge of our confusion when, in answer to the next question, the rogue, with the most consummate impudence imaginable, admitted that he had been tried for stealing a dead body, which was what he meant by "rescuing a fellow-creature from the grave!"

MATRIMONIAL ADVERTISING.

THE practice of advertising for wives is beginning to be revived. In a morning paper, a few days since, we saw a couple of these "ads," as the printers call them, together. This shows the taste of the person who "makes up" the paper. In both cases there is the usual notification that "the dust" is indispensable; but from the wording of the advertisements, it is obvious, that if the matrimonial candidates be only satisfied on that point, they will not be over scrupulous on others. In fact, it would be a perfectly fair inference from the advertisements, that the "monish," as a Jew old clothesman would say, is the only qualification which either of the aspirants at domestic bliss considers in the least degree necessary. It is a pity that persons who can thus sacrifice all the better feelings of human nature to their passion for money, should not, by mistake, run their necks into some matrimonial halter, which they would find anything but agreeable. There are still a goodly number of Xantippes in the world, and

it is to be hoped that this brace of adventurers may each, in the end, be united, for better or worse, to one of the sisterhood. In the mean time, why do not the fair sex, when they see such advertisements, rise *en masse* to revenge themselves for the insult thus offered to them? They are not lacking in spirit nor deficient in ingenuity in other cases: why not give an illustration of both these qualities in the present instance? It would be no difficult matter, if a dozen or two of the ladies were, as the representatives of their sex, to put their heads together, to devise some scheme for inveigling these devoted lovers of money into a place, in which, in the true American fashion, they might be tarred and feathered from top to toe, and then turned out into the streets, to be barked at by the dogs, pelted by the boys, and laughed at by all. In the days of Falstaff, Windsor had its "Merry Wives" to vindicate the honour and honesty of their sisters in matrimony, and to revenge the attempts meditated by the fat knight against their own conjugal fidelity. And has not London its "Merry Maids," at the pre-

sent time to punish these insulting speculators on their simplicity and good nature? If a few good examples were made, in the way we are recommending, of these "fellows of the baser sort," female sensibility would soon cease to be wounded by such advertisements as those to which we have referred.

CURIOUS BEQUEST.

A SCOTTISH provincial paper mentions that a gentleman who lately died in India, has left the whole of his fortune to the old maids, daughters of "respectable parents," of his native place. The fact is pregnant with meaning; there is more in it than meets the eye. There can be no question that the deceased had been a great gallant, in early life, and had trifled with the feelings of more than one of the then young ladies, now the "old maids," of his native place, and that he has bequeathed his property to them simply for the purpose of administering an opiate to a troubled conscience. We are always happy to see, under any circumstance, symptoms

of a sense of past errors ; but we are especially so ; when such a sense of them is accompanied by an earnest desire to offer an atonement as far as can be done. It must be admitted on all hands, that the gentleman in question, in making his bequest, gives the most convincing evidence in his power, of his anxiety to make reparation for any injury he may have done the sex of his native place ; but we wish he had been a little more particular and definite in the terms of his will. We are informed by the same provincial print, that the introduction of the terms, “ daughters of respectable parents,” is likely to lead to endless annoyance and difficulty, to those who are to be the executors of the will, in deciding as to the eligible claimants,—every old maid, as might have been expected, stoutly maintaining, whatever her parents may have been, that they were “ respectable.” As all our lexicographers differ in their definitions of the word “ respectable,” and as the magisterial luminaries of the land are equally at variance on the subject, it is much to be regretted that the deceased, out of pity to his executors, did not take the trouble to give his

own notion of what constitutes respectability. Another inconvenience has arisen from his not being sufficiently precise and definite in his phraseology. He gives no data by which a person can judge of what he considered the time of life at which a virgin may be said to cross the threshold of old maidship, and consequently become entitled to the benefit of the bequest. The only hope the executors have that they will not appropriate the money improperly by giving it to persons not entitled to the boon, arises from the well-known abhorrence of the sex, especially of the "daughters of respectable parents," to be included in the hateful category. Nothing but dire necessity will induce a female, the daughter of "respectable parents," to confess herself an "old maid."

A HARD CASE.

AN American paper contains the following brief, but serious complaint:—

"One of our subscribers has stopped his

paper, because we refused to insert an obituary, two columns in length, of a child of his which died at the age of two months. We should have had no objection to have published a short obituary of the infant but what would our other readers have said to two mortal columns?"

It was, doubtless, a most unreasonable thing to request the insertion of so voluminous an obituary of a child, which only reached the innocent age of a couple of months; and the fact of the father stopping his paper, because it was refused, only shows with what queer customers our Yankee brethren of the press have to deal. We are sorry, however, after all, that our friend of the broad sheet, on the other side of the Atlantic, did not, as a matter of curiosity, publish this two-column obituary; and we beg to give the father of the infantile deceased due notice, should this meet his eye, that if he only send the obituary to us, we shall take care that it graces the columns of some of our metropolitan journals. What we are curious to know is, where or how, this exemplary parent possessed himself of materials respecting his infant out of

which he could spin two newspaper-columns. We had thought the first two months of infancy were not particularly prolific of epochs or vicissitudes, from which an obituary might be manufactured. It is pretty clear, one would think, that at that tender age, the babe, though free from the vices of after life, could not have been overstocked with the positive virtues. What then, in the name of wonder, could this Yankee parent have had to say about his "little cherub," that would have filled two columns. It may have been a "dear babe," as all babes are; and it may moreover have been devotedly attached to "nurse" and to "pap;" but then these are such common-place affairs in the annals of babyship, that we cannot conceive on what ground this affectionate father thought them worthy of particular mention in the case of his child. We wish we had not seen the above paragraph: it has inspired in us a consuming curiosity to see the two columns of infantine biography. The best memoir ever written, of any philosopher, statesman, or warrior, would not to our minds, prove half so attractive.

THE SIAMESE TWINS.

THESE interesting personages are now, it appears, in Paris. One of the journals compliments them on being much attached to each other. So they undoubtedly are; but like many an attachment between husband and wife, it is one which they cannot help. Whether, if they had it in their power to separate when they pleased, they would betray so much fondness for each other's company, is a question which it is not for us to answer. They act wisely, however, circumstanced as they are, to make themselves as agreeable together as possible. It would prove a much more "untoward circumstance" in their case, than in that of any other "united pair," were they addicted to quarrelling, as neither could, by any exercise of his ingenuity, escape even for one little moment, from the vituperation of the other. Husband and wife, when they quarrel, can betake themselves to separate apartments; and by that means, enjoy at least a temporary exemption from the reproaches and criminations of each other. Not

so with the Siamese Twins: whatever the one chooses to say the other is compelled to hear.

WORKING COLLIERS.

WE could almost wish that fate had destined us to be "working colliers." In that case we should have had some hopes of eventually attaining to wealth, if not to fame. As poor magazine editors,* we have not the most slender prospect of either. The individual referred to in the following paragraph, may bless his stars that he was made a working collier, instead of the editor of a journal. Had he filled the latter situation, he never could have had the good luck which is in reserve for him; for no one ever yet heard of an editor establishing his claim to property of "immense annual value;" nor of triennial or septennial value either. But let the paragraph alluded to tell its own story:—

* The author at this time conducted the "Monthly Magazine;" in which periodical several of these "Notes" appeared.

"A working collier, hitherto in very distressed circumstances, has recently established his claim as heir to property of immense annual value, near Ashby, in Leicestershire."

This is the eleventh or twelfth "working collier," who, if the papers may be credited, has had similar good fortune within the last six months. In all the other instances, if we remember rightly, there was a peerage or some great title associated with the "immense property." We are surprised to miss this pleasant-sounding appendage in the present instance. Probably it may be the next thing to which this "working collier" may establish his claim. What lucky rascals these underground gentry are! It is right, however, to add, that however clearly they establish their claims to immense property, distinguished titles, &c., in the columns of public journals, they do not succeed, in one case out of a thousand, in establishing their claims in a court of law. It is the latter consideration alone that prevents us from throwing ourselves into a coal-mine at once.

IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.

MEN may laugh at and ridicule the idea as they choose, but intellect is on the march at the present moment. Important discoveries are daily, nay, hourly being made in the arts and sciences. The most remarkable discovery which has been made of late, is thus recorded in the "Morning Herald" of Saturday, with all the solemnity which characterises the announcements in that journal:—

"A newly-invented instrument called the *Axyrite*, has just been announced, with which, to the great dismay of the barbers, persons may shave themselves without the use of either razor, soap, or water."

It is quite natural that the announcement of the discovery of the *Axyrite* should spread dismay among the barbers, just as the expected loss of office spreads dismay among the corrupt politicians in Downing Street. But on the Benthamite principle of the greatest happiness to the greatest number; that is to say, when we

ourselves chance to be among the latter—we rejoice with ineffable joy at the ingenious invention. The barbers, fortunately, have one course open to them, which, we doubt not, they will forthwith take; namely, to apply to the legislature for compensation. If their occupation, like that of Othello, be gone, what matters it to them, in point of fact, whether it be by an act of the legislature, or by the ingenuity of some of their fellow-subjects. Their right to compensation is, in either case, undeniable. We understand that the Duke of Cumberland and Colonel Sibthorp intend henceforth to shave by means of the Axyrite, as their only objections to the process before, had their origin in an unconquerable aversion to the application of soap or water to the lower parts of their physiognomies. It is also said, that as a mark of their admiration of the great genius of the inventor, they mean to use all their influence with their political friends to procure a government pension of £500 a-year for him, when the Tories return to office. The ingenious inventor of the Axyrite, who is a zealous Conservative, also holds out hopes, we

understand, of being able to discover, in three or four weeks, a moral instrument by which he will not only be able to eject Lord Melbourne and his colleagues from office, but by which he can secure to the Tories the reins of government till the crack of doom. The name of the latter instrument has not yet transpired.

MIRACULOUS ESCAPE.

A MORNING paper, in describing an explosion which took place a few days since in a house in the New Cattle Market at Islington, states, "that two persons were blown through the roof, but happily escaped uninjured." Lucky dogs that they were ! The escape was certainly a miraculous one, but that is no reason why the truth of the "penny-a-liner's" statement should be doubted. This class of *literati* are in the habit of seeing and hearing of hair-breadth escapes, and other marvellous occurrences, which never meet the eye or ear of anybody else. We have no doubt that Baron Munchausen was a "penny-a-liner;" for no one but a member of

the fraternity, could ever have undergone such wonderful vicissitudes, or witnessed such marvellous incidents, as those with which his celebrated pages teem. There exists no more rational ground for doubting, that the two individuals alluded to were blown through the roof of the house by the explosion, and escaped uninjured, than there is for questioning the veracity of the venerable Baron's statement, when he assures us, that on one occasion, when he had ascended a tree, it was torn up by the roots in a storm, and after being whirled for many hours in the air, and travelling a distance of three hundred miles, returned to the same spot, and struck its roots again in the earth—he remaining all the while quite comfortably ensconced amidst its ample foliage. We have, we repeat, no more right to doubt the truth of the first statement, than we have to question the veracity of the second. We might have added, that the story of the two men being fired through the roof, just as if discharged from the barrel of a gun, without receiving the slightest injury, farther perhaps than a momentary fright, is every whit as true

as that other adventure, narrated by the aforesaid Baron,—namely, that when on one occasion making a long voyage, some huge fish swallowed the ship, a three-decker, and that the unfortunate ship with all on board, remained in the belly of the said fish three months, when the sovereign of the sea on being one morning suddenly seized with sickness, discharged itself of a commodity which must have been very burdensome to his stomach, especially if tender. We may ourselves mention a rather marvellous occurrence which took place in the county of Elgin, in 1829, but which, Elgin being 600 miles from the metropolis, has escaped the penny-a-liners. The memorable flood of that year, amongst other ravages it committed on the property along the banks of the Spey, swept away in the middle of the night, a little house, consisting only of what Sir Walter Scott would have called “a but and a ben,” tenanted by an aged weaver. The water, somehow or other, never entered the house though it carried it away; and the weaver, who had been up all night in order to finish a web he had on hand, continued most

industriously to ply the shuttle during the time he and his domicile were being carried forty miles down the river. The water then gently deposited the house and its inmate on an eminence it chanced to overflow to the depth of five feet, and left it there perfectly uninjured. In passing Craigellachie Bridge, the venerable weaver happened to look out at the window, and observing a great number of people leaning over the parapet, gazing at the flood, he took off his hat, and making a gentle nod, saluted them with—"It's rather a dewy morning, friends!" The spectators assented, and the industrious weaver resumed his shuttle. It was only when he went out after having taken breakfast, by which time the waters had subsided, that he discovered that a change had taken place in the locality of his humble abode.

THE VILLAGE LOVERS.

THE 17th January of 1684, was the appointed wedding day of Sandy Brown and Mary Allan. They had been acquainted with each other from their infancy. In addition to similarity of disposition and habits, there were other circumstances which served to increase their reciprocal attachment. Both were born within ten minutes of each other on the 17th of January, 1664. They were the first-born of their respective parents. They were baptised by the same clergyman, and at the same time; both parents, as is still the custom in many parts of Scotland, holding up their young innocents in church, and promising in presence of the whole congregation, as well as before their Maker, "to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

The ceremony of infant baptism, as practised by the Church of Scotland, is one of a peculiarly solemn kind. That the vows which the father then comes under, are not often disregarded and trodden under foot, would be saying too much; but that they are far more generally religiously observed in that than in any other country, is a fact too manifest to be disputed. The moral and religious character of the Scotch as a nation, is doubtless in a great measure to be ascribed to the deep impression which parents generally feel of the heavy responsibility under which they are laid by the engagements they come under on behalf of their offspring at baptism.

Sandy and Mary were sedulously instructed, in early age, in their religious and social duties. They had this other great advantage—the exemplary conduct of their parents. Without a good example, indeed, on the part of parents, the very best precepts are certain of being lost. Children are quite the creatures of example. They imitate, or attempt to imitate, whatever they see or hear, whether good or bad; for in

early life it is all the same—children having no idea of the distinctions of vice and virtue. To imitate indeed the conduct of their parents is as natural to children, as it is to breathe, or to eat or drink.

Sandy and Mary grew up together, exhibiting a wonderful similarity of disposition and habits. They were both put to school at the same time. That school, as is common in Scotland, was a woman's. The utmost amount of education which the old matron undertook to communicate to her pupils, was reading in the "Shorter Catechism," the "Proverbs of Solomon," in a detached form, and the "Old and New Testaments." Sandy and Mary formed at this early age, an indefinable attachment to each other. They always contrived to sit together; and they shared in each other's amusements, just as if there had been no other boys or girls at school but themselves.

Their respective parents lived only about thirty yards distant from each other. This afforded them ample opportunities, which were eagerly embraced, of pursuing their harmless

"plays" together. Their early and strong predilection for each other did not escape the observation of the parents; and it called forth the frequent remarks of the neighbours. "Surely they'll be married yet," meaning together, was a very common observation on the part of those neighbours. Both mothers had, half-seriously, half-jocularly, said "Maybe they'll be man and wife yet," the first time the former met after the baptism.

As they advanced in years, both were sent to the parish school within three months of each other. Here Mary received a smattering of spelling, and also a little writing. Sandy got a little more "lear," as the peasantry of Scotland phrase it: he was put to "counting" (arithmetic), in which he made respectable progress: he was consequently longer at school than Mary.

The attachment of the youths grew with their growth, and strengthened with their strength. By the time Sandy reached his eighteenth year, he was well versed in "farming." As his parents found him steady and "willing to do well," the father became security for the rent of a

small farm for him. This he entered, and finding that, by good management, it answered better than expectation, he bethought himself of getting "settled in life;" that is, getting married.

Without anything like a formal solicitation of Mary's hand; without, indeed, any question being asked, or any answer given, the two lovers found themselves making every possible preparation for the wedding.

The village of Knockando, like every other village or town, has its own share of eavesdroppers and malignants. To put the "swine through" marriages, when on the carpet, was the almost sole profession of two or three disappointed "old maids," and envious "young lasses," at that time; and the ingenuity displayed, the deep schemes devised on such occasions, were certainly of a kind from which one could not withhold his admiration, however much he may have reprobated the principle which was at the bottom. Sandy and Mary escaped all annoyances of the kind. Their usually inoffensive and winning manners disarmed even malignity itself. There seemed to

be a degree of sanctity about them, which operated as a shield from everything morally hurtful. All the villagers, and the inhabitants of the country for a circuit of some miles—for they were extensively known in the district—spoke with much manifest pleasure when it was understood that a day had been fixed for their wedding.

That day approached. The banns were duly proclaimed in church, and every arrangement was made for celebrating the marriage with that innocent zest with which country marriages were wont to be observed in the north of Scotland. It was—and is still, though not to an equal extent—the practice, to invite almost the entire population of the neighbourhood to the marriage. On such occasions every male person pays a certain sum for what he eats and drinks; the bill for “drink,” as it is called, being always regulated by the current price of whisky. As a compliment to the “women,” no charge is made to them for drink; and as it is presumed their stomachs are not so capacious as those of *our* sex, a sixpence is all that is

demanding for their dinners. On these occasions more than three hundred people are sometimes present: we ourselves have witnessed two hundred. The former was about the number in this instance. To "bid," *i. e.*, to invite so many people, part of whom are scattered over a thinly-inhabited district, and to do it *in propria persona*, is no easy task. It would be the death of us who live in town; it sometimes proves too much for the country people themselves. Sandy and Mary—for both the bride and bridegroom must go together when "bidding"—bore up under the fatigue wonderfully well. Blithe was their reception everywhere when on the important errand; many and cordial were the congratulations they received.

It was now the 15th of January, and consequently within two days of the day which was to unite hands where hearts had been united so long and so closely. "All things, mither, I think are now ready," said the bride on that evening. "I believe they are, child," said the mother, "except it be the barn for the folks to take their dinner and dance in, and it

can be cleaned out and fitted up in an hour or two."

"We'll leave that to you, mither; you and father will take charge of that," said Mary.

The mother signified her assent.

"You can do it the morn, while Sandy and I are in Elgin," remarked Mary.

"Elgin, Mary! You dinna mean to gang to Elgin the morn."

"Yes, mither: ye ken I hae my wedding gown making there, and some other duds. Besides, there are some other little matters we have to arrange there."

Mary's mother strongly pressed her to stay at home; adding, that some one else would bring her wedding gown, and transact any other little matter of business for her.

Mary and Sandy, however, were both anxious to go themselves; and no farther opposition was at that time offered to their wishes.

They went to bed that night sooner than usual, that they might get up earlier to set out on their journey next morning.

There are many superstitious notions still, as

then, prevalent, even among the more respectable of the Scottish peasantry. The howling of a dog at night, and the crowing of a cock before morning, are universally considered to be evil omens—to betoken death in the neighbourhood of the place where the sounds are heard. At ten o'clock, the howlings of a dog were heard in all the houses near to the abode of Mary's parents. Nothing can have a more gloomy influence on one's mind at such a late hour, and in a night of pitchy darkness (which this was) than these canine howlings. With country people, it is a great matter to ascertain which way the animal looks while he utters his doleful cries. Some boys who had, by order of their parents, risen from their beds, and sallied out to drive away the four-footed disturber of the peace, saw, by means of a light emitted from one of the adjacent houses, that the animal's face pointed somewhere in the direction of the habitation of Mary's parents. About half-past eleven o'clock, a cock commenced crowing in the house of a near neighbour. Mary heard it, as well as the dolorous sounds emitted by the dog; but she

had been taught by Sandy to disregard the notion, that such things prognosticated anything, as altogether unfounded. With Mary's mother, it was otherwise. She was a firm believer in such forebodings; and the impression on her mind was, that some calamity or other, which would affect her, was about to happen. She did not positively conclude, that any disaster was to befall her in the person of her daughter Mary; but if she did not like the projected journey of the latter before, she liked it a hundred times worse now.

Next morning came. Mary arose to make ready for proceeding to Elgin by the first dawn of day. Sandy also equipped himself for the journey. The bride's mother renewed her entreaties to Mary to abandon the idea, with tenfold force. She and the bridegroom, however, persisted in their resolution.

"Well, well," said the mother, "sin' ye *will* go, would you not better have company?"

"We'd as lief gang our lanes," answered Mary; "but to please you, mither, we will tak' anybody we's ye like to name."

"Fat say ye to your sister Jean and Sandy's brother? Ye'll had ane anither out a langer at any rate."

Mary's sister was to have been bridegroom's maid; and Sandy's brother, the only one he had, a lad of full eighteen, was to have been bride's man.

"I think it would be much better, if they would stay at hame and make things ready, and then they could come and meet us after dinner time," said Sandy.

"That's my opinion also," remarked the bride.

The mother acquiesced, and the youthful bride and bridegroom set out themselves at eight in the morning.

"God bless ye, and send ye both weel hame again," ejaculated Mary's mother to herself, as her daughter and apparent son-in-law turned the corner of the house which shut them out from her further view.

The Manoch-Hill is a place well known in the north of Scotland. It is a dreary barren waste intervening between the fertile parish of Birnie and the populous, well-cultivated district of

Knockando. The traveller who passes along this "blasted heath," has eight long miles to walk without seeing either "house or hall." It is a cold moor in the very hottest days of summer: in the winter its exposure renders it excessively inclement: in the latter season it is seldom without a covering, more or less deep, of snow. Through this hill Sandy and Mary had to pass in going to and coming from Elgin.

Both the bride and bridegroom's friends were all bustle and activity in making everything "neat and tidy," and having matters "decent" for the joyful occasion of to-morrow. All the villagers, indeed, participated in the happiness which the marriage of the two amiable youths was expected to afford to themselves and relatives. Many a maiden dwelt with light heart on the anticipated pleasures of the dance. Many girls had sweethearts of their own whom they were to meet on the joyful occasion. Those who had lovers secretly hoped that the circumstance of witnessing Mary and Sandy's marriage would "spur" them on to celebrate their own; and those who were loverless, severally hoped that

some youth or other would be infected with a relish for connubial bliss, and that they might win his heart. The needle was put into more extensive requisition; there was a greater consumption of thread that day in the village of Knockando, than there had been for years before.

The two lovers promised to be home by a little after dark. The light had faded away, darkness had overspread the face of that part of the country, for a full hour; but no word of Sandy and his bride. The doating affection of the parents of both, gave birth to some slight solicitude for their return. Another half-hour passed away, and still no intelligence of the lovers. The parents of each now became painfully anxious; and what added to their uneasiness was, that the bride's man and the bridegroom's maid, had just returned, saying they were not to be seen. It was proposed that a number of the inhabitants of the village should go out to meet them; but this idea was abandoned because of the boisterousness and darkness of the night. All of a sudden the wind rose to a great height; and blew, as if from all quarters, with tremendous

fury. A kind of snow called sleet, whirled through the air with such force and so thickly, as to threaten suffocation to anyone who would venture to the hill.

The alarm of Sandy and Mary's parents had now reached its climax. The fathers conducted themselves with the fortitude which became the occasion; but the mothers were in a state of all but absolute distraction. Some of the sympathising neighbours now and then endeavoured to console them, by whispering that possibly the lovers had been induced to stay all night with the bride's relatives in Birnie. This, however, was seen by all to be improbable: even those who expressed the hope deemed the thing unlikely. The whole night passed away without any tidings of the lovers. What a night! There was not one closed eye, bating those of children, in the village. The wind blew with unabated fury: how well did its melancholy moanings "accord with the souls' sadness" of the villagers! To the imagination of the mothers, its every gust wafted the dying groans of their children.

Morning came at last, after a night which, in

so far at least as the parents were concerned, had few parallels in the annals of human wo. It was a night which seemed to the villagers generally a short eternity. With the first indications of day, every person, male and female, in Knockando, capable of moving a foot, set out for the Manoch-Hill to find the lovers, dead or alive; the latter was scarcely even hoped. The people—for so in the country they like to be called—had not proceeded far when they found that what had been sleet with them had been snow and hail on the hill. The huge wreaths which they saw around and before them, told too plainly what a night it had been in the Manoch; and would have extinguished all hope, if any had remained, of ever seeing the lovers in life.

Some took one direction, and some another, in prosecuting the search. For several hours, all efforts to discern any traces of Sandy and Mary were fruitless. Two young men, more active than the rest, went all the way to Birnie, to ascertain what hour on the previous night the lovers had entered the hill. They had entered it an hour before dark : they had been detained

in Elgin longer than was expected. Mary's relations in Birnie had pressed them very much not to "take out" that night; "but they would not be advised:" they said their parents and friends would be "uneasy about them; and would think something had befallen them."

The two young men returned with this intelligence, accompanied by several persons from Birnie. Before they had got half through the hill, they saw a number of people congregated together, as if surrounding some object. They guessed the rest. They approached: Sandy and Mary were lying lifeless among the snow. The father of the bride was the first to make the discovery. He saw a black object on the pure white snow, about a hundred yards distant from the road. He approached it; it was Sandy's hat. About five yards farther on, he found the two lovers buried in a wreath of snow; a small part of Mary's mantle was all that remained uncovered. What an affecting sight! There lay the two lovers on the cold ground, and clasped in each other's arms! In life their hearts had been united; in death they were not divided.

How long they had wandered in the hill ; how long they had contended with the fury of the storm before they were overcome by it and perished, is and will be a mystery until eternity reveals the fact.

Soon did the mournful though not unexpected tidings reach Knockando. A cart was yoked, and sent off to convey home the remains of the unfortunate lovers. Those in the hill had all by this time gathered round the lifeless bodies of Sandy and Mary. The procession, therefore, had all the appearance of a funeral ; with this difference, that the people were not apparelled in black. That mattered little : though they wore no exterior mourning, their hearts were steeped in sorrow, as deep and genuine as was ever experienced by living mortal. With slow and solemn pace the procession moved on ; it entered the village. What a scene ensued ! There was not a man, old or young, who did not "play the woman ;" who did not weep profusely. The women, for the most part, were all but frantic. Their demeanour sets all description at defiance.

The remains of the lovers arrived in the vil-

lage precisely an hour before the time appointed for the marriage. It was a most affecting sight to witness "lads and lasses" dropping in from the surrounding country, all arrayed in their best and gayest attire, quite unconscious of what had happened. How soon was their joy turned into sadness! The suddenness of the mournful news, had an effect on many which they did not recover until their dying day. Many in the fulness of their friendship, brought presents for the bride. Alas! she needed them not.

The worthy clergyman of the parish, a venerable man who had exceeded the limits of human life assigned by the Psalmist, was as deeply affected as any, excepting the parents and relatives of the deceased, on this melancholy occasion. The religion he preached, however, and which he also habitually practised, taught him to be more composed than others.

Still Nature would assert her supremacy in the heart. While most assiduously and tenderly administering the consolations of religion to others, the moist eye and the overflowing fullness of heart as indicated by his utterance, told

in eloquent terms how much he stood in need of such divine aids himself.

Everything around served by contrast to heighten the sorrowful nature of the occurrence. The Bride's-bun, the bread and biscuits, spirits and beer—everything, in short, passively spoke of the happy occasion that was to have been. And there stood the pious and aged divine, praying in impressive accents over the inanimate bodies of those he was to have joined in holy wedlock, and on whom he was to have pronounced his special benediction.

In two days afterwards, the remains of Sandy and Mary were interred in the parish church-yard. They had expired together, locked in each other's embraces; why should they not be buried in the same grave? They *were* consigned to the same narrow house, amid the sighs, and sobs, and tears of the whole country-side.

On the following Sunday, the worthy clergyman preached their funeral sermon. It was, indeed, an affecting discourse; there was not a dry eye in the church, from beginning to end. The venerable old man seemed as if more than

himself on the occasion. Men oft-times complain of short memories; there was not one present but carried with him to the grave a vivid remembrance of the minister's appearance, manner, and matter, on that day. With what touching pathos did he dwell on the inscrutable yet wise dispensations of Providence! How heart-stirring his appeals to the consciences of his hearers, as to whether or not they were prepared for their latter end! How impressive his admonitions to the young as well as the old to reflect on the uncertainty of life! "Who," said the worthy old man, "who, that last Sabbath saw the deceased in this place, and thought of the difference between their ages and mine,—who that saw and thought of this, could have supposed that they should be called before me? And yet so it is; *they* are in their graves; *I* still stand here to warn and exhort *you* to be also ready for the final summons. *Which* of you may receive it first, is known only in those heavenly regions where, we confidently trust, their spirits now are." Could anything be more affecting? And to give the whole yet greater weight, there

was in the clergyman's countenance as he emphatically pronounced each word, a solemnity seldom witnessed on earth. In truth, he *looked* a sermon of the most powerful kind.

The story of Sandy and Mary was not only kept in melancholy remembrance by the then generation; but long after all who knew the lovers had fallen asleep with their fathers, it continued to draw tears from the eyes of those of their children whose hearts were formed to feel.

A stone, with a suitable inscription, was placed on the grave of Sandy and Mary. It was much defaced by time and weather more than fifty years ago; whether it is still capable of being decyphered, is more than the writer can tell.

THE MAGIC BRIDLE.*

Who that has resided in the north of Scotland, has not heard of the late celebrated Mr. Willox, and his no less celebrated Magic Bridle? Who has not heard of the wonders he performed by means of that bridle? There is, however, one fact comparatively unknown connected with that article, which deserves to be mentioned: the bridle was not originally his; it belonged to a woman who resided in the neighbourhood of Elgin. Under what circumstances it came into his possession has never transpired.

So great was the virtue supposed to reside in this bridle, that the peasantry of the north of Scotland, when anything happened to their family or cattle, often travelled to Mr. Willox in the worst weather, and over the worst roads,

* It may be right to state, that all the incidents recorded in this tale are believed to this day by a large portion of the peasantry.

and even over large tracts of country where there were no roads, all at a distance of forty, fifty, or even sixty miles, when the bridle was in his possession, that they might obtain the benefit of its magical power. The lower classes in the counties of Inverness, Nairn, Elgin, and Banff, most potently believed in the efficacy of this bridle in almost every case of indisposition. Mr. Willox was as much venerated by the Scottish peasantry, as ever the Abbe de Paris was when in the zenith of his miracle-working popularity. Mr. Willox even pretended, and the peasantry believed he had the power, to discover any person, by means of his bridle, who had committed theft. We ourselves have conversed with an old man, who, on his sheep being stolen, travelled nearly fifty miles to Mr. Willox, to learn the name of the thief. Mr. Willox told him the name of the depredator, and informed him where, on his return, he would find his sheep. On his return he went and accused to his face the person Mr. Willox had named, of having stolen his sheep. The man at once confessed the crime, and restored the stolen property.

But to come to our story. The woman who possessed the magic bridle before it fell into Mr. Willox's hands, always made it the instrument of mischief. The common people maintained that she and the "bad man" were too intimate together. Hence she was dreaded by all her neighbours. Those who did incur her displeasure were severely punished. The species of punishment she most commonly inflicted, was that of changing the offender, night after night, when the senses of ordinary mortals were steeped in forgetfulness, into the form of a horse, and then riding him almost to death. Care, however was taken by Janet—for that was her name—to restore the object of her displeasure to his wonted shape before day-light. The punishment, in many cases, was constantly repeated for a succession of nights without any third party being aware of the circumstance.

Arthur Rainie was one of the most inoffensive and well-behaved lads in the county of Moray. He had been for several years in the employ of a farmer within less than a mile of Janet's residence. He seemed to love everybody, and every-

body seemed to love him in return. In January, 1768, he became sickly in appearance. His countenance, which was usually the picture of health, assumed a pale hue; he lost his wonted flow of spirits; and his person, which had before inclined to corpulency, had in two short weeks been reduced to a perfect skeleton.

All his acquaintances became alarmed. They saw that if the progress of the unknown malady under which he laboured were not speedily arrested, he would soon sink into his grave. They had once or twice asked him if he knew the cause or nature of his illness; but as any questions of that kind manifestly hurt his feelings, they desisted for a time from pressing the matter.

It was soon seen, however, that this was only a mistaken humanity towards the young man; and accordingly the people in the neighbourhood resolved on eliciting from him by some means or other, whatever he knew on the subject. His master, as one who had most influence with him, was employed to question him more closely on the matter; but after all the efforts the master had made, nothing could be extorted from the

young man as to show how his malady affected him.

As a last resource, it was agreed to call in a physician. Dr. Anderson visited Arthur.

"Poor lad," said the doctor, "you look very ill indeed : what is the matter?"

"Cannot tell, Sir," was the answer.

"How does the disease affect you?" continued the physician.

Arthur was silent.

"Young man," said the doctor, "you must speak ; otherwise neither I nor anybody else can do anything for you."

Arthur looked as if a feeling of bashfulness restrained him from speaking on the subject of the nature of his complaint. The physician observed this and then motioned the other parties to quit the room.

On being left alone with Arthur, the doctor again questioned him as to how he felt, or what he himself conceived was the cause of his excessive weakness and unearthly appearance, adding that if he did not communicate whatever he knew on the subject, his death and that speedily,

might be the consequence of his mistaken delicacy.

The appeal was not made in vain. Arthur, in broken accents, mentioned, that for some time past, he had, night after night, without intermission, imagined in his sleep, that he had been metamorphosed into a horse, and had been galloped through rivers and lakes, and over hills and mountains, at a prodigiously rapid rate; and that he was always taken home again before day-light, when he was restored to the human form,

The physician on hearing the story, concluded that the young man's intellects were disordered, and that his bodily ailments arose from those of his mind. He mentioned this to Arthur's master, adding that the only chance of recovery would be by sending him to a lunatic asylum.

The country people viewed the thing in a quite different light. When they had learnt how Arthur was affected, they at once saw in his illness the evil agency of the "witchwife;"* but how to

* In Scotland, witches are always called witchwives.

counteract that agency was more than they could tell.

While "the neighbours" were thus musing on the unhappy fate of Arthur, puzzling themselves as to how he could have incurred the displeasure of the witchwife, and expressing their unavailing regret that they could do nothing to rescue him from her malignant agency, Robert Phimister, a young lad of great shrewdness and uncommon courage, said that he should lie that night in the same bed as Arthur, in order that he might know whether or not he actually was, as he supposed, taken from his bed and metamorphosed into a horse; and if so, might learn, if possible, by what means the singular change in his form and nature was effected.

Arthur and Robert both went to bed together at the usual hour. Precisely as the clock struck twelve, and while the former was sleeping and the latter lying awake, the witchwife appeared at the bed-side, and shook the magic bridle over Arthur (who was nearest to her) uttering at the same time particular words. In a moment, the unfortunate young man was meta-

morphosed into a fine horse. The woman mounted the newly-made steed, and instantly galloped out of sight. Robert remained in bed until he should see when his acquaintance returned. The latter returned at six o'clock in the morning, profusely perspiring, and very much exhausted.

Robert, without mentioning to anyone what he had seen, desired Arthur to sleep next night in an adjoining bed, as he himself wished, for a particular reason, to lie that night in the bed they had both occupied the night before. The proposal was agreed to. Arthur slept on another bed : Robert laid himself down on the one which both had occupied the previous night.

The hour of midnight struck on the wooden clock in the room in which Robert's master slept; which room adjoined the apartment in which Robert himself and his companion had retired to rest. Contemporaneously with the first chime of the clock, appeared the witchwife with the magic bridle in her hand. She approached the bed in which Robert lay, and was preparing to shake the bridle over him and to utter the usual incantation, when he, having kept himself

awake in expectation of the occasion, jumped up, and snatching the bridle from her hand, shook it over herself, repeating the words he had heard her use on the preceding night. To his indescribable astonishment, she who had formerly bewitched so many, was now in her turn metamorphosed into a high-spirited mare. Robert mounted the animal, and in a few moments both disappeared. As the mare had no shoes on her feet, he proceeded with her to Elgin, and called a blacksmith out of his bed to shoe her. This being done, the young man rode "the beast" at a hard gallop, for nearly an hour, without one minute's intermission.

Next morning came, and Janet's husband, whose name was Joseph, was surprised at the absence of his wife. He mentioned the circumstance to his neighbouring acquaintances, at the same time expressing his fears that some accident had befallen her. He wished them to go through the country with him, to see if any information could be got regarding her: but they one and all refused, from an apprehension that they might thereby incur her displeasure.

At this moment Robert Phimister was observed riding past Joseph's door on a fine charger.

"Fa' does that beasty belong to?" inquired Joseph.

"She belongs to myself," answered Robert.

"I wish you would len' me her as lang as I would tak' to gang to and come frae Elgin," said Joseph.

"With all my heart; but I'm afraid you will not be able to ride her; she's a restive animal."

"I'se tak' my chance o' that; the very mischief must be in the beast if I dinna manage her," observed Joseph.

"You'll require then to keep the bridle tight," remarked Robert.

"Leave ye that to me," said Joseph.

The young man dismounted; and in an instant Joseph was astride on the back of the restive steed. The animal set off that moment at a hard gallop for Elgin. Joseph, on his arrival, made every inquiry whether his wife had been there within the last twelve hours; but no one had seen her.

It occurred to Joseph after his unsuccessful inquiries in Elgin, that possibly his wife might, unknown to him, have got out of bed early in the morning, and gone on a visit to her relatives in Dallas. He consequently determined on galloping thither as fast as possible.

The Palmer-cross stone bridge did not exist in those days. There was nothing but a wooden bridge for passengers, which so far from being passable by horses, could not, from its then decayed condition, be crossed without considerable risk, even by pedestrians. Whoever, therefore, had to cross the Lossie in that direction with carts, gigs, carriages, &c., or on horseback, had no other alternative than to ford the river.

This was often attended with danger, and when the Lossie was large, it was wholly impossible. The river at this time, though not in the strict sense of the term large, was somewhat swollen, in consequence of a heavy shower in the hills on the preceding day. Joseph was aware of this; but still he thought that by "wading cannily," he might reach the opposite side in safety. He gently spurred his steed into

the water: by the time the animal had made the seventh step, there was nothing but the head and a small part of her back to be seen. The rider became greatly affrighted, and in his confusion, while endeavouring to get off the mare's back, took the bridle from off her head. He was no less surprised and horror-struck at the fact of finding the mare that instant disappear and her place supplied by his own spouse, than alarmed at the perilousness of his situation. The surprise and alarm were mutual; they were equally shared by the witchwife at finding herself and husband, by a process unknown to her, up to the neck in the Lossie. After great exertions, both succeeded in getting out of the watery element.

The magic bridle was carried down the river. How it was recovered and afterwards got into the hands of Mr. Willox, is, as we mentioned in the outset, more than we have been able to learn.

Joseph and Janet went home together, thoroughly drenched as they were. Whatever might have been the latter's disposition, she had no longer the power, having lost the magic bri-

dle, of injuring anybody towards whom she had conceived a dislike. As the story goes, the marks of the spurs were visible in her sides, and the prints of the nails with which the blacksmith had shod her, in her hands and feet, till her dying day. To prevent the marks of the nails being seen in her hands, she invariably wore gloves. She only lived five years after the occurrence of the circumstances we have recorded. She was buried in a tomb in the south-west corner of the Elgin Cathedral church-yard, which is still to be seen in the same condition as when she was "laid down," no other person having been since interred in it.

Arthur Rainie rapidly recovered from his indisposition, and the "whole country-side" rang with the praises of Robert Phimister, for the spirit and tact he had displayed in detecting and punishing the witchwife.

THE HIGHLAND COURTSHIP.

IN a remote corner of a mountainous district in the north of Scotland, there resided some years ago, an eccentric person of the name of Andrew Grey. The earlier part of Andrew's life had been spent in tending sheep; but on arriving at the age of manhood, he abandoned that employment and betook himself to such kinds of labour as the neighbours around thought fit to offer him. Even the site of Andrew's humble abode largely participated in the singularity of his character. It was situated near the central ascent of a large hill, fronting the north. Along the base of the hill ran a river of two or three feet depth, from which our hero extracted the necessary supplies of water; and any visitor who returned from his abode with hasty or incautious steps, was sure to be so forcibly propelled by the

laws of gravitation, in his downward progress, as to run a great risk of being precipitated into the liquid element before he had time to slacken his pace.

For the dwelling-place which Andrew inhabited, he was wholly indebted to his own ingenuity. Without either rule or compasses, or having had recourse to any mathematical process, he sketched out the plan of his house in his own mind; and no sooner had he done so, than he commenced building operations. The materials of which the tenement was composed, consisted chiefly of pieces of green turf, which, in the neighbourhood of Andrew's residence, were considered excellent substitutes for brick or stone. With the help of a good axe and spade, the only implements which he employed for the purpose, he succeeded in rearing a habitation, which, whatever the more fastidious might think of it, was, in his own opinion, a master-piece of modern architecture. On entering the threshold, it was indispensably necessary that you should not walk over-erect, lest, peradventure, like Dr. Franklin in the house of his friend,

your face came in unpleasaut contact with a large rough piece of wood, which served as a lintel to the door ; for Andrew, adapting the structure and dimensions of his house to his own diminutive stature, proportioned the size of the door by the same standard of measurement. When he had finished his building, his language and conduct must have made anyone believe, that he formed a much higher estimate of his architectural abilities than Sir Christopher Wren could possibly have done, when he had completed the vast superstructure of St. Paul's. There was one small window in Andrew's habitation ; but it was only from the outside that any traces of it were perceptible : the inner part was so closely packed with stockings, shoes, trousers, &c., old and new, of which it was the grand repository, that it as effectually excluded the light of heaven, as the densest wall could have done. Whatever quantity of light illumined the interior of Andrew's cottage (and it had not by any means a superabundant supply of that commodity), was emitted through the medium of the chimney. Immediately on entering the door,

your eye was irresistibly attracted by an opposite scaffolding of rather peculiar form, which had been erected for the nocturnal residence of about a score of hens—a species of the feathered tribe for which Andrew had an unconquerable partiality. If your visit happened to be in the morning, your ears were sure to be assailed by the most discordant sounds imaginable, arising from the irregular choruses of these vocal performers, in conjunction with Andrew's strenuous but unsuccessful efforts to hush them into silence.

But whatever faults others may have detected in Andrew's house, or in his system of domestic government, he himself was more than satisfied with both; and the only appendage which, in his estimation, was requisite to complete his earthly happiness, was—a wife; and to be his wife, and the mistress of his habitation, was, in his view of the matter, the highest point in the social scale at which any woman could aspire. The only difficulty which occurred to his mind was, whether his intended partner should be young, middle-aged, or considerably advanced in years. A great many cogent arguments were

urged for these several stages of existence; but after hearing attentively and weighing carefully, the evidence for and against the claims of each, he finally decided that a wife on the wrong side of fifty was deserving the preference. To meet with a single woman who had reached this age was by no means a difficult task; but then there were certain qualifications, over and above the mere circumstance of the requisite antiquity, which it was indispensable she should possess, previously to becoming the wife of Andrew; and these were not to be met with in every female who crossed his path.

Nearly twelve months had elapsed, during which he was all activity in learning the respective histories of those within his more immediate neighbourhood; but, to use his own phraseology, "none of them would do." He saw the necessity of turning his eyes to some other quarter, but knew not in which he was most likely to be successful. At this critical juncture, a large wedding was held in the house of his nearest neighbour; and, as is common in the Highlands, on such occasions, upwards of two hun-

dred people assembled together, the largest half of whom consisted, of course, of women. The evening on which they all met was one of the most active and interesting of Andrew's life. It was quite an era in his existence. Never did Lavater, when endeavouring to establish his system of physiognomy, scrutinize the faces of his fellow-men, with more intense attention than Andrew, that evening bestowed on an examination of the several faces of those females who surrounded him. Fortunately there was one, though only one, who seemed to come up to that standard of female excellence which he had formed in his own mind. She was dairy-maid in a gentleman's house about eight miles distant from Andrew's residence. Neither he nor she had any recollection of ever having seen each other before. She was, as he would have expressed it, a "braw saunsy lass," which, translated into plain English, means that she was of goodly dimensions in the circumference of her body;—resembling, in that respect, the portly appearance of any well-fed landlady with whom the reader may be acquainted.

In the northern regions, particularly among the inhabitants of hills, and glens, and moors, the peasants are not over-fastidious in their manners; and Andrew, who in addition to this might urge the plea of the violence of his love,—without waiting to submit to the ceremony of a formal introduction, instantly seated himself by the side of his charmer, and entered with the utmost seriousness into conversation with her. The ardent affection with which she inspired our hero on the first view he obtained of her, was incalculably increased when the parties had had a little conversation together. Discovering, as it was not difficult to do, his peculiar dispositions, she adapted herself to them; expatiating on the infinite advantages which a husband, whose income was but limited, derived from a prudent and economical wife; and in a manner indicative of the greatest shrewdness, concluded by observing, that she had made it the whole business of her life to study and practise the most rigid economy. She did not forget to express her conviction, that if ever fortune favoured her with a husband, she would furnish him with a

practical proof of this. This last observation, and the inimitable manner in which it was made, raised Andrew's admiration of his new acquaintance to the highest possible pitch.

The reader will be quite prepared for the information that the love-struck Andrew proposed to accompany his sweetheart home. The proposal was, of course, gladly accepted; and the happy pair set out together, individually though secretly, blessing their stars for their fortunate interview. The greatest part of their journey was spent in perfect harmony, and in the enjoyment of a greater measure of happiness than either had ever before experienced; but just as they were within a mile of the residence of the fair, a circumstance occurred which wholly disconcerted both, at least for that evening. A small river, of about a foot and a half in depth, intervened betwixt them and her abode; and as to have gone by the nearest bridge across it, would at least have made two additional miles to her journey, she was very unwilling to undertake so circuitous a route, especially as she was already greatly fatigued from her exercise at

the wedding, and the distance she had travelled. Andrew, as a proof of his gallantry and love, very naturally offered to cast off his shoes and stockings, and carry his dearest, dry shod, over the river. She assented; and the enterprising Andrew, with the object of his affections on his back as well as in his heart, commenced fording the river. The first few paces he performed highly to his credit; but just when about the middle; whether it was from the confusing influence of love, or the unsupportable pressure of his Herculean load, or some stumbling-block which lay in his way, or from all of these causes together, was never satisfactorily ascertained—but just when about the middle, he lost his equilibrium, and precipitated both himself and the commodity he had on his back, with an incredible force, into the midst of the water. In consequence of the peculiar nature of their fall, there was a good deal of tumbling and splashing, before they regained their feet; but from the circumstance of Andrew being undermost, and his beloved not being distinguished for her agility in releasing him, he was likely to come off with

the worst of it. One would have imagined, to have seen the ludicrous scene, that the loves of the couple would have been literally drowned. No such thing. Although their thorough drenching did a good deal to moderate their reciprocal protestations of unalterable affection, and placed them, on the whole, in rather awkward circumstances, they still cherished the sentiments of love towards each other. The result of that evening's interview was, that they made an appointment to meet again that day fortnight, at the house of the dairymaid's master, for the further discussion of the important matters of love.

The appointed and anxiously-wished-for time at length arrived, and Andrew set out on the momentous errand. On reaching the door of the house which usually contained what was, in his estimation, the most valuable treasure on earth, he knocked lustily. A sprightly servant-maid made her appearance; but unluckily Andrew had, during the previous evening's meeting, in consequence of the pressure of more important matters, forgotten to inquire the name

of his dearest; and not knowing this, nor even the office she filled in the house, he knew not by what intelligible mark of distinction to ask for her. Andrew and the sprightly-looking damsel, without uttering a single word, stared each other in the face. At last, summoning up all his courage, he muttered out the question, "Is she in?"

"Who is it you inquire for?" said the spruce servant-maid.

"For my lass," replied Andrew, after some little hesitation.

"But who, in the name of wonder, may *she* be?" retorted the inquisitive damsel, taking at the same time a most comprehensive survey of him.

This question, and the expressive look with which it was accompanied, completely non-plussed our love-sick hero. Seeing himself so unequally matched, he maintained an unbroken silence. On this the unwelcome interrogator withdrew; and, mentioning the singular circumstance to her two fellow-servants, one of them went to the door to witness the eccentric An-

drew, and to see whether she might not be the person after whom some unknown lover was so kindly inquiring. She looked him full in the face; and he, in return, viewed her with the most intense steadiness, without a word being interchanged between them. She abruptly left him, and her place was instantly supplied by another; but the moment she made her appearance, Andrew's patience being quite exhausted, and supposing that "lasses" might thus present themselves *ad infinitum*, he, with a harsh look, and in a chagrined tone, at the same time closing the door betwixt himself and her maidship, told her she was not the person he wanted.

Andrew now directed his steps towards home, reprobating in his own mind the conduct of his beloved, in not observing with punctuality the assignation she had made with him. He had not proceeded three-score and ten paces, when he descried the object of his affections advancing towards him in breathless haste. An explanation was no sooner demanded than granted. She had been sent by her mistress to a neighbouring town, on some important errand; and it

was not in her power to return sooner. This was in Andrew's estimation, quite the *amende honorable* ; and no sooner had it been made, than he inquired her name, telling her at the same time, in a half-melancholy mood, of the disagreeable consequences which had already resulted from his ignorance of it. She immediately intimated to him that it was Bessy Brackonordy. Andrew, afraid to trust his treacherous memory on a subject, his ignorance of which had so recently brought him into such an unfortunate scrape, immediately on the communication of Bessy's name, pulled a slip of half-white, half-brown paper from his pocket, and with a pencil which he accidentally had in his possession at the time, impressed it thereon, in sufficiently legible characters.

The evening's interview concluded without anything particular, excepting a pretty moderate quantity of reciprocal protestations of immutable love; and withal a shrewd hint from Andrew, that at their next meeting he would have a very momentous proposition to submit to Bessy. The time appointed for the contemplated meeting

was that day week,—the place, Bessy's master's house; which was deemed peculiarly convenient on this occasion, because the family were to spend a few hours that evening at a neighbouring house: and the two other servants were likewise to be from home! They would consequently have the house to themselves, and could arrange matters to their own minds without any third party being privy to their discussions. The great—the important day at length arrived, and Andrew set out from his secluded habitation in the highest spirits, arising from the anticipation of the unbounded pleasure which he expected the approaching meeting would afford him. Burning with anxiety to be in the company of his beloved Bessy, he took the nearest direction which could lead to her, determined not to be opposed in his progress by ditches, or dykes, or hedges, or any other earthly obstacle whatever. After surmounting many impediments which threatened to intercept his path, he came in contact with one which proved of a most formidable nature; it was a large ditch, which he must either overleap,

or content himself with being at least one half-hour longer from the embraces of Bessy. The latter alternative he could not submit to; and therefore, summoning up all his agility, he made a spirited but, as ill-luck would have it, unsuccessful attempt to overleap the ditch: he just jumped with sufficient force and a sufficient distance, to insert himself up to the shoulders in it; and what between the muddy nature of his new element and the perpendicular attitude of the opposing banks, he felt it a much easier matter to place himself in his unfortunate predicament, than to extricate himself from it. He did, however, at last rescue himself from his muddy situation; and, on finding himself on a more solid standing, he took a mournful inspection of his personal appearance, and then held a Court of Common Pleas in his own mind, whether he ought to return home, or proceed to his sweetheart under such singular circumstances. He resolved on the latter alternative; for, independently of the more than tropical warmth of his affection for Bessy, he justly deemed it rather hard, that, after having come such a distance he

should return without having accomplished his errand ; the more especially as the circumstance in question could be regarded in no other light than as an unavoidable accident. Forward, he accordingly proceeded, little thinking that a much greater misfortune yet awaited him. He approached the kitchen door, knocked aloud, and the attentive Bessy immediately made her appearance.

“Dear me,” she exclaimed, as she beheld her lover shivering of cold ; while the water, —which was by no means of the purest kind, —dropped in considerable quantities from the different terminations of his clothes,—“dear me what, fat’s the matter, Andrew?”

“Lat’s to the inside,” replied he, casting, at the same time, a wistful look towards the kitchen fire; “lat’s in and I’ll tell you all about it.”

Bessy, who had hitherto stood in the centre of the door, holding its fastner in her hand, then requested Andrew to come in, and seat himself at the fire. He of course complied ; but, while handing him a chair, accompanied with the remark, “Sit down there,” she unfortunately,

while he was seating himself, moved it a little, with the intention of placing him more opposite to the fire, and down he went on the floor, causing his heels, at the same time, to mount up in the air. In the hurry of the moment he took a large cast-mettle pot, which lay beside him, and which was abundantly daubed with soot, in his arms, just as a drowning man lays hold of whatever is nearest to him. The scene which followed baffles imagination. The circumstance of his being thoroughly saturated with his last adventure, made the sooty impression come off so distinctly on his hands, his face, and his body, that, altogether he presented one of the most ludicrous spectacles that the eyes of man ever perhaps witnessed. Scarcely had he recovered his perpendicular position, when a knock was heard at the door, which Bessy immediately, as if by a kind of instinct, recognized to be given by her mistress; and, dreading the consequences of her seeing a man in her house under such unparalleled circumstances as those in which her lover was then placed, she, before opening the door to her mistress, stowed him

away into a wall-press in the kitchen which was made to answer the various purposes of holding fire-wood and other kinds of fuel. The door was opened, and Mrs. ———, having forgotten something in the kitchen, which was, indeed, the cause of her present unexpected visit, proceeded directly thither; and while in the act of reprimanding Bessy for the lowness of her fire, she was in the act of opening the door of the wall-press with the intention of adding a small quantity of fuel: but, just at that moment, out sprang the terrified Andrew, like a wild animal newly released from confinement. The lady first screamed, and then fainted; and Andrew, one half of the way on all-fours, and the other in something like his usual position, made a most hurried retreat out of the house—not even deigning to cast a look behind, but leaving Bessy and her mistress to manage matters as they best could. He now directed his steps towards home, with his head strongly gravitating towards the earth, moralizing with sorrowful heart on the misfortunes of life, and occasionally ejaculating a wish that he had never entertained

the idea of entering the matrimonial state; but had contented himself with living a life of single blessedness in his sequestered abode, employing his leisure hours in attending to the affairs of his cottage, and particularly the government of his hens and chickens.

Some months elapsed ere another meeting took place between the lovers, during which period the adventures of the last interview continually haunted the unhappy mind of our hero. Indeed, it became a question with him, whether fate was not frowning on his conduct, and whether it would not be more advisable for him ever after to shun the society of womankind. After hearing evidence *pro* and *con*, he resolved to make another attempt to get his mind fully opened to Bessy, but determined that in the event of any further unfortunate occurrence, he would no more aspire at matrimonial felicity. The great difficulty now consisted in being able to procure an audience of the possessor of his affections; for he was determined that he should never again go within doors to transact his love matters. About this time a fair was held in one

of the adjacent towns, and as these fairs are generally attended by the country people for a considerable distance around, it so turned out that Andrew and Bessy were among the rest. Towards the evening, it fortunately happened, that our lovers met; and after the usual inquiries for each other's health, they retired to some unfrequented path, and there mutually upbraided each other for being the origin of last meeting's disasters. Bessy was rather hard on Andrew for being so stupid, in the first instance, as to fall into the ditch, and then, in the second place, for paying her a visit under such peculiar circumstances; while he strenuously contended, that the noble motives by which he was actuated, constituted a glorious apology for the unhappy event. At the same time, he further maintained, that Bessy ought to be the subject of remonstrance and reproof, in consequence of her ill-advised, though no doubt ingenious scheme of concealing him in the wall-press.

After a few more words of unpleasant altercation, matters were brought to an amicable adjustment, and the reconciled pair resumed the dis-

cussion of incomparably more important topics. Andrew wisely resolved on embracing the present opportunity of coming to close quarters. "I have a house—a good house—a comfortable little house, Bessy, and nobody to keep it." "That's a pity," replied the unassuming Bessy, "fan there are so mony in the world that hinna half a house to live in." "Will ye come and be my wife, and keep my house, and I'll ma'k ye as happy as the day's lang?" This was coming to the point at once; but, as the female sex, on occasions like these, even where they have not made great advances in civilization, are generally a little shy, Bessy answered, "She did na ken." "Dinna ken!" replied the astonished paramour, "dinna ye ken whether ye would like to be happy in being the mistress o' a' house, an' my wife, an' the mither o' a' family? Come, come, ye must tell me plainly whether yell ta'k me or no: and lat's get the wedden past as soon as we can, for I have suffered o'er muckle uneasiness of mind already." Here there was no possibility of evasion; and Bessy, in hesitating accents, gave consent. The happy pair then

proceeded towards the house of Bessy's mistress, discoursing on the circumstances connected with the celebration of the intended nuptials, without one discordant word being uttered by either in the course of their journey. Having seen Bessy securely housed, and having previously made an appointment with her, to meet in his own abode in the course of ten or twelve days—for by that time the term of her engagement with her mistress would expire—Andrew was in the act of buttoning his coat, and was about to commence his journey homewards, when, as ill-luck would have it, he staggered too near the residence of a chained mastiff, and the watchful animal unceremoniously seized him by the tails of his coat, took him to share in his own bed of straw, and detained him a close prisoner until morning. Andrew, not relishing the society of his canine companion to the same extent as he had relished the company of Bessy, made a strenuous attempt during the night to obtain his liberation, imagining that his keeper was fast asleep; but the trusty animal, again seizing him by the tails of his coat—and it unfortunately happened to be

his Sunday's one he had on at the time—literally tore one of them off, and left the other hanging about his feet, suspended only by a mere shred.

It were impossible to describe the astonishment of Bessy, when the first object that caught her eye as she opened the door in the morning—for she happened on this occasion to have risen first—was her ardent admirer lying beside Tiger on a small quantity of straw, and exposed to a very heavy shower, which had continued without intermission during the night. Andrew looked unutterable things; and Bessy, without either of the parties articulating a word, was so surprised at the singular situation of her lover, that she instinctively turned back, and shut the door, leaving Andrew and his new associate to increase their acquaintance. Bessy, however, in the course of a few minutes, recovered her presence of mind so far as to resolve on informing her master, who by this time was putting on his clothes, of the extremely critical situation of her apparent husband; but carefully concealing, at the same time, that she had any idea of whom or what he was. The master released our hero

from his close and disagreeable confinement, and he returned to his own humble habitation, blessing his stars that things were not worse with him, and that the day was fast approaching when his union with the object of his affections would put an end to all the calamities he had had to encounter in his capacity of lover.

Previously to the wedding-day, our lovers had other two meetings together; but, as Bessy had by this time left her servitude, these were held in Andrew's habitation, and nothing occurred which could prove the source of further uneasiness to either. Their banns were, of course, duly proclaimed, and in this enviable situation we leave them, until, in our next chapter, we attempt a description of their marriage, and the circumstances therewith connected.



THE HIGHLAND WEDDING.*

As we intimated in our last, the wedding-day had at length been fixed; the banns had been duly proclaimed; and the interval was all anxiety and busy preparation for the celebration of the nuptials. The preliminary arrangements of a country wedding in the Highlands of Scotland, are some of the most laborious exercises in which either man or woman can engage. Perhaps by far the most oppressive part of these necessary preparations, is to invite the intended guests. Let the reader, as mentioned in the tale of "The Village Lovers," imagine the arduousness of the task of inviting, in *propria persona*, from one hundred and fifty to two hun-

* This is intended as a continuation of, or conclusion to, the preceding tale.

dred people, to witness Andrew's public declaration, that he had chosen Bessy to be his right and lawful wife; and these not inhabiting some densely-populated village, but scattered over a space of ten or a dozen miles; where, instead of Macadamised roads, or her majesty's highways, you have hardly any beaten thoroughfare at all; but must plod your way over mountains and moors—up hill and down hill—at one moment traversing, with blistered feet, the bleak and flinty rock; at another sinking into the miry bogs almost up to the knees. These are circumstances which are, no doubt, very unpleasant in themselves, but they are, nevertheless, unavoidable; and the anticipation of the consummate felicity which Andrew took for granted would necessarily follow his marriage, reconciled him to them in a very philosophical manner.

The day—the great, the important day, big with the fate of Andrew and Bessy, at length arrived. As will naturally be supposed, every happy individual of the motley company who assembled on the occasion, was decked out in the best apparel which could be procured. It

had for the preceding eight or ten days occupied the intense meditations and fertile imaginations of the Highland lasses, as to how they should appear to the greatest advantage on this momentous day: for it is the highest ambition of the Celts to outrival each other on occasions like this; and there are many of the fair sex who associate their future destinies in life with the display of their charms at these country weddings,—as it is generally from them that country courtships date their origin.

The antiquated and singular dresses in which some of the northern lasses were accordingly attired, would have excited to the highest pitch the risibility of southern readers. It is principally, however, with the wedding costumes of Bessy and Andrew that we have at present to do. As all eyes are fixed on the bride, it is generally expected that she shall appear to some advantage in the article of dress, on the occasion of her wedding. Bessy was therefore decked out in a white gown or skirt—we do not know which—but from its spacious dimensions, particularly in the matter of its circumference, one would have

taken it for granted it had been intended for some large cask belonging to Whitbread and Co. or some other manufacturers of the "*entire*." The truth is, that the moment the wedding-day had been fixed on, she planned out in her own mind, the form, dimensions, and decorations of this part of her marriage apparel; and as she had the shrewdness to observe, that newly-married women, when they enjoy health and happiness, have generally the good fortune to improve in the portliness of their appearance, she very judiciously adopted the precaution of proportioning the size of this article of dress to her expected growth. At the lower extremity of this part of Bessy's attire, were some of the most singular figures which ever entered the human imagination; several of which an antiquarian, unacquainted with the peculiarly original construction of her mind, might have been apt enough to have mistaken for a correct transcript of Egyptian hieroglyphics. These figures were made by the help of a needle and thread, and furnished most convincing proof that Bessy had no competitor in some kinds of dress-making. On one

part of the valuable robe, you would have seen something resembling a horse with three legs and one ear: on another you would have beheld a representation of the same animal with four legs and the half of a fifth; while close at his heels followed a third galloping at full speed, but destitute of the hindmost part of his body. Here you would have seen a hive, with scores of bees hovering around it; there something like a coach-and-four surcharged with passengers, crushing to death, in its rapid course, hens and chickens by the dozen. In fine, the motley group of figures which decorated Bessy's wedding-gown entirely baffles description, and would have rendered it eminently worthy of a distinguished place in any repository of curiosities in the kingdom—say the world.

But however much we were surprised at and delighted with the ornaments of our heroine's gown, we were still more so with the form and decorations of her wedding-cap. If the organs of her head had been developed in proportion to the size of the protuberances on the article in which it was enshrouded, a phrenologist would

have been at no loss to have discovered the most predominant faculties or propensities of her mind. We are not sufficiently versed in the technicalities of millinery to give our readers anything like an adequate description of this singular part of the bride's wedding attire; but we have no hesitation in saying that, for the ingenuity displayed in its formation, it infinitely surpassed anything we have seen of the kind; and we positively despair of ever seeing its equal again. About the centre it possessed a very elevated altitude, strikingly resembling some towering steeple; and at each of her ears it assumed the appearance of a bridge, consisting of two arches and a railing. One part of it, at the back of her head, you would have mistaken for an inflated balloon; at the front the sides protuberated to such an extent, that you could recognize her face only as if it were a distant object; while you would have considered other parts of it an admirable miniature representation of the Alpine mountains.

Equally singular was the wedding costume of Andrew. His hat, if the article he wore on

his head possessed any claims to the designation, was certainly a piece of the most pliable material we ever had the fate to handle. The forms it assumed were much more multifarious than the diversified positions of Harlequin. Every time it occupied our hero's head, it appeared in some new position. In fact, if any adjacent individual happened to touch it, though but slightly, it started into a new form, as if the wand of Shakspeare's queen of the fairies had been exerting its magical influence on it. At one time, you would have seen it possessed of something like an octagonal shape; at another, it bore a striking resemblance to a huntsman's cap. Now it appeared like the half of a globe; anon, you would have been able to have numbered by the help of your fingers, if unacquainted with the rudiments of arithmetic, from a dozen to a score of well-formed corners in its form. As the clock struck some particular hour, you would have seen it entirely destitute of a brim; and in a few moments, you would have deemed it brim altogether.

Andrew's coat admirably corresponded with

his hat. It was made of some kind of cloth resembling thread-bare blankets, dyed of a bluish colour. The invention and execution of this matchless article were entirely the results of his own ingenuity; and afforded a fine specimen of his proficiency in the art of tailorship. He had not the advantage of regularly receiving, like most of our northern professors of tailorships, "the fashions as they appear in the metropolis;" nor had he ever heard a single syllable regarding the "much-admired and highly-improved system of mathematical cutting." Nevertheless, as has been remarked, under all these huge disadvantages, he did produce a coat—and a wedding-coat too. It possessed three tails. Those on the right and left were tapered to a point, and were within about an inch of the same length; but the one in the centre extended beyond them at least half a foot, and was cut in such a manner at the extremity, as to form a beautifully correct representation of the new moon. Each of these tails had a pair of buttons appended to it—one at the top, and another at the bottom. These were of all sizes, and were

covered with cloth of all colours. Here you would have seen one of a dark hue, hardly the size of those generally used for shirts; there you would have seen another of a yellow complexion, with a few scattered black spots, which furnished evidence equal to ocular demonstration of a rather too close collision with some sooty object.

The other portions of our bridegroom's coat were equally curious. It had no neck; but what it lacked in this particular, was amply made up in another. The breasts were certainly of goodly size, and were constructed in such a way, as that the one so far lapped over the other as to button exactly under the arm. The one was cut across so as to harmonise with the length of the waistcoat; but the other proceeded in a straight, or rather in a crooked line, until it terminated at the extremity of one of the tails. These breasts were liberally supplied with buttons of the description already mentioned. Instead, however, of being placed on the coat, with the usual regularity, there were so many "outs and ins," that a young student

of geography would have been in danger of mistaking them for a representation of the course of the Nile. And in the matter of breakages, they certainly were unrivalled by anything of which we have ever heard. They were, in fact, an epitome of destruction itself. We question whether among two dozen buttons which Andrew had somehow or other contrived to fasten on his coat, there were three whole ones to be met with. In one place you would have seen only the neck as a remnant of what had been there; at another place you would have observed another mathematically broken by the diameter; while close by it you would have witnessed a third with so many broken pieces as to cause it to resemble a windmill.

Andrew's small-clothes likewise corresponded with the other parts of his costume. Regarding the original maker of this portion of his apparel, neither he nor any of his neighbours could form any conjecture: it was the only legacy which had been bequeathed to him by his worthy father. This one thing, however, was abundantly certain, that his trousers had often gone through

his own fingers in the way of altering and improving; and on the day referred to, they presented as many patches of all descriptions and sizes, as Joseph's coat could possibly have been possessed of colours. At their extremities there peeped out a goodly quantity of straw, which proved to a demonstration that his garters were composed of that commodity, twisted pretty compactly together, by the help of his fingers and thumbs.

In addition to all this, Andrew had a pair of good stout shoes, though, on other occasions, he was very much accustomed to go bare-footed. These were sufficiently broad at the toes, and were amply studded with large knobs—amounting, on a very moderate computation, to upwards of fifty. It was necessary on so important an occasion as his wedding, that Andrew's shoes should be black; but how this was to be accomplished was, in the first instance, another difficult problem; for he had neither brushes nor blacking; and he could not, on any consideration, brook the idea of asking the loan of them from a neighbour; for this would have been to expose

his deficiency in the ordinary articles of household furniture. We are such unqualified admirers of the indescribable excellencies of "Warren's Jet Blacking," that we would almost have deemed it a paradox to affirm, that shoes could have been worn without it. But we can assure Mr. Warren, that though the lustre of his blacking may be celebrated enough in certain quarters, and its unrivalled merits duly appreciated, yet Andrew had never heard of its existence. What then was to be done? Every part of his humble dwelling, and particularly towards the chimney, was superabundantly supplied with soot; and the happy and ingenious idea occurred to him of applying the wet dish-clout, first to the chimney, and thence to his shoes; and thus to *his* complete satisfaction, his object was accomplished.

The moment agreed on for the public union of our happy couple was now rapidly advancing; and Andrew, accompanied by a goodly number of jovial acquaintances, set out for the residence of his lovely bride. Owing, however, to the want of a mirror—by the way, he had never seen his

physiognomy through the medium of this valuable domestic article, in his life,—he could not exactly ascertain the present hue of his countenance, nor in what situation the dress of his upper story stood. To have asked any of his attendants as to these matters, was an idea which he spurned with indignation; because that would have been to have given them a greater insight into his domestic deficiencies than he was willing they should possess; and even supposing he had questioned them regarding the complexion of his face, the darkness of his house would have precluded the possibility of their returning him a correct answer. To the place, therefore, of their destination they directed their steps; but they had not proceeded any distance, when one of the merry company who had been the first to cast his eyes the way of Andrew's face, instantaneously burst out in a violent fit of laughter. The cause of his risibility was soon discovered to be the ludicrous appearance of our hero's face; and as the other attendants surveyed it, they unanimously joined in the laughter.

“Fat’s the matter?” inquired the astonished and confounded Andrew, as he observed all eyes directed towards him, and saw every glance accompanied by shouts of laughter.

It was some time before any one of the party could so far compose himself as to answer our hero’s interrogatory. At length one more distinguished than any of the rest for the gravity of his manner, explained the cause of their merriment. Andrew had been in the habit of washing his face only once a fortnight, on an average. He had, however, a few moments before setting out to complete his felicity, bestowed on it an extra rubbing; but, unhappily, in the confusion occasioned by the expiration of the time which he had fixed for commencing his journey, and the hilarity of his spirits in the anticipation of his approaching matrimonial bliss, he hastily, as already intimated, laid hold of the dish-clout which had recently been so serviceable in the blacking of his shoes, and “with all his might and main” applied it, in that state, to the scrubbing of his face; and the result was, that it left some of the most striking specimens of the

powerful effects of light and shade we have ever seen. This was the sole cause of the immoderate mirth of Andrew's attendants.

It was agreed on that Andrew should content himself with what improvement his companions could make on the complexion of his countenance, by means of a handkerchief, until they should come to a river which was contiguous to Bessy's house, there being no water conveniently within their reach at the time. Onward, therefore, they proceeded; but just as they arrived at the little river referred to, they were met by the bride's friends; and in an instant inquiries into the state of Andrew's health and general assurances of the deepest interest in his happiness, floated through the air in every direction. This was all very good indeed; but it was attended with very unfortunate consequences; for the unprecedented attentions which were here paid to Andrew had the effect of making him and others forget both his face and the water, and to proceed to the sacred altar just as he was.

The party entered the house of the bride, and

had seated themselves as comfortably as the nature of circumstances would admit of; but hardly had the harmony of the company been established, when it experienced a momentary interruption. Benjamin Kiliken and Sam Dawson had long been, in a love affair, formidable rivals to each other. The object of their individual affections was at this time seated by the side of the former. The latter observing this, and anxious to see her in some other quarter, asked her to the door, to speak for a moment with him. She signified consent; and just as they were about to remove, Benjamin arose, and, forcibly seizing a massy arm-chair which lay hard by, exclaimed, "Satisfaction! satisfaction!" assuming, at the same time, a very threatening attitude, and suspending the unwieldy weapon above the head of his antagonist. At this momentous crisis the minister opportunely appeared; and his presence had the effect of restoring order.

The important moment had now arrived when all the disasters which had befallen Andrew and Bessy in the course of their courtship,

and during their arrangements for the wedding, were to be more than compensated by their public union. The marriage service had been begun, and was proceeding for some time in the ordinary manner; but when the clergyman came to that part of the Scottish method of performing the ceremony, in which he had to ask the happy bridegroom whether he was willing to take Bessy to be his lawful wife, Andrew, not apprehending the import of the question, in consequence, we suppose, of his intense contemplations on his impending connubial felicity, looked the minister full in the face, and exclaimed, "Fat's your will, Sir?"

At this unexpected note of interrogation, and recognizing at the same time the happy admixture of white and black which Andrew's physiognomy presented, the worthy officiating gentleman indulged in a smile, in which he was joined by the whole of the company, excepting Bessy, who stood as still and mute as a statue.

"Are you willing to take this woman to be your lawful wife?" repeated the clergyman. "Tak her!" exclaimed Andrew, with a smile,

at once expressive of his astonishment, and of his self-congratulation at his situation as bridegroom; "Tak' her! Dear bless you, Sir, I wonder you would put such a droll question to me. It's lang, lang, since I made up my mind to that; and I'll wager ony half-dozen o' my best black hens, with white taps, that there's nae an unmarried man in the house, but would tak wi' a thousand good-wills, if he could only get her."

Here the laughter of the clergyman and the rest of the company became indescribably immoderate; and it was not until some time elapsed, that the former could so far compose himself as to resume the wedding service. The same question was then put to Bessy; but she had, somehow or other, learned to signify her assent by a tolerably-genteel inclination of the head.

Our happy pair being now publicly declared married persons, it remained that Bessy should be conducted to Andrew's habitation,—her new home,—by her husband and friend. In the course of the journey nothing of material importance occurred. They arrived in safety; and after Bessy had been welcomed by Andrew's

friends, the whole company sat down to dinner. This they were obliged to do in a large neighbouring barn—which was everything but wind and rain proof—for the guests were so numerous, that Andrew's habitation could not contain one half of them.

The furniture on the present occasion admirably corresponded with the place. The largest table consisted of four long deals, about twelve inches in breadth, and placed in a straight line across as many shapeless forms. Close by it, another table was erected on the same principle, but on a more limited scale. The seats were formed in the same manner as the tables, though, of course, of considerably less altitude; for chairs, on the present occasion, were quite out of the question. By this time it was becoming dark; and ere the stomachs of the company should lay siege to the eatables that were in preparation for them, it was necessary that they should have the benefit of some light on the subject. No candle or candlestick is ever seen in the houses of the Highland peasantry excepting on occasions like the present; and for

the services of this night, same half dozen candles, price one penny each, were procured. Candlesticks, however, were wanting; but the ingenuity of the Highlanders is inexhaustible; and several large turnips, with a hole cut out in each, were found to be excellent substitutes. These were ranged as conveniently as possible in different parts of the barn.

Half-a-dozen earthen plates, of the most capacious dimensions we have seen, were next placed on the table, brimful of broth, boiling hot; and in close juxtaposition to these were deposited the same number of plates, containing perfect mountains of butchers' meat. Every one now pulled his spoon out of his pocket—for strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, that in such cases every guest must take the necessary articles for supping, cutting, and carving along with him;—every one, we say, now pulled his spoon out of his pocket, and those who had knives and forks did the same; though, we must confess, that comparatively few possessed these latter implements,—their fingers being generally found to be tolerably good substitutes. Our

insatiable guests being now fully equipped, were on the eve of commencing a brisk cannonade on the "smoking hot" objects before them, when some one of the company suggested the propriety of snuffing the candles, as a preliminary step. Andrew, wishing to be peculiarly active and to display himself to the greatest advantage on this eventful night, immediately mounted the largest table to snuff the candle which was nearest to him; but, as a pair of snuffers was an article entirely unknown in the place, he was obliged to supply the defect by availing himself of his fingers. In his hurry, however, he unfortunately pulled the candle and turnip-candlestick from their resting place, and both alighting in one of the plates of broth, diffused a considerable portion of its boiling hot contents in all directions. Those who experienced their scalding efficacy made such a violent simultaneous motion with hands and feet, as to upset, in a moment, the fourth part of the seat and table; and all the good things which were so recently ranged on the latter, were now scattered on the floor. The confusion and dismay which followed, entirely baffle descrip-

tion. To have seen the par-boiled guests scrambling and tumbling on the floor, and to have heard their discordant screams, while the more fortunate part of the company were convulsed with immoderate laughter, would have been a subject of unparalleled excellence for the pencil of even Hogarth himself.

Things having again been adjusted as well as the nature of circumstances would admit of, the voracious company commenced operations on the edibles that were set before them. Towards the lower end of the table, however, there was a deplorable lack of a huge round of beef; and, consequently, those more immediately in that quarter of the house, fared but soberly. This piece of beef—a staple commodity at a country wedding—had been abstracted by a large mastiff. The master of the animal having been one of the hapless number who had been swimming in the floor amid rivers of boiling broth, had, by his new kind of articulation, attracted the attention of Tiger; but the latter, perceiving, on his approach towards his master, this large piece of meat tossing about on the floor, seized

it in his mouth, and made a precipitate retreat out of doors, leaving his master to shift for himself in the best way he could. It is scarcely necessary to add, that Tiger feasted as well, and enjoyed himself as much, on this eventful evening, as any of the company.

After dinner succeeded the dancing—an indispensable practice on all occasions of this sort. The music was anything but of first-rate order: it, however, gave universal satisfaction, and that was enough; Highlanders are not over fastidious in this respect. As regards the dancing, the north-country people follow no specific rules. Everyone jumps as he thinks fit; and the man who makes the greatest motion is generally accounted the most accomplished dancer. There is no limitation as to the number that shall be on the floor at once. Everyone may rise and sit down as he thinks fit; and it is no uncommon spectacle to see the whole company up at once, and the fiddler into the bargain.

In this manner the evening was spent, all seeming hearty and happy, without anything further of material importance occurring. The

meeting then broke up. The happy pair, now man and wife, retired to rest. Those who resided in the immediate neighbourhood, made the best of their way to their respective homes; while those who had come from a distance were provided with such accommodation for the night as barns, bires, and stables afforded.

THE KEBBOCK STONE.

"SUMMON the clan for to-morrow morning by day-light," said Macpherson to Bromarris, one of his superior retainers: "let the matter be decided by the sword, since Campbell is obstinate. See that the men be in proper trim for the field. Let the motto of each be 'Victory or death.'"

Bromarris was obedient to the injunction of his chieftain. Before he slept, he summoned the entire clan, though scattered over a circumference of many miles, to meet Macpherson at his castle by the dawn of the following day.

Macpherson and Campbell had, for many years, cherished a deadly enmity towards each other. They were neighbouring chieftains, both residing in Nairnshire. They had each about an equal number of retainers. They were considered equally powerful; but each aspired at

the ascendancy. The ostensible cause of their present quarrel was a large tract of ground which intervened between their estates. Each claimed it as his; the one on the ground of lengthened possession, the other on that of an unrevoked grant of King David Bruce.

Each clan, under the leadership of its chief, mustered strong on the following morning. The sky was lowering; it rained heavily at the time, as it had done during the night, and the greater part of the previous day. The wind, too, blew with tremendous fury; not from one, but from all quarters of the compass. It rose into a perfect hurricane, which, with the torrents of rain that poured from the heavens, had an awe-inspiring effect on the mind, and rendered it perilous for man or beast to be in an exposed situation. To meet each other on the battle-field so long as the weather wore this frightful aspect, would have been altogether out of the question. Each of the chieftains felt this; and each, with his clan, assembled at his mansion, where they were obliged to wait until the storm should subside. The retainers of either chieftain burned

with impatience to measure swords with their foes. They cursed the elements for being unpropitious. "Let us kill, or be killed," was the common ejaculation. "He who shall run his sword through the body of Campbell, shall be right well rewarded," said Macpherson to his men. "He who shall slay Macpherson shall not be forgotten," said Campbell, when inciting his vassals to deeds of prowess.

The tempest began to abate at noon ; and by three o'clock the day became fine. Each chieftain and his adherents accordingly set out at that hour from their different castles, for the battle-field.

The distance between the chieftains' mansions was eight miles ; making the space of ground which each clan had to travel, four miles. A small river at the spot where the hostile clans were to meet divided the estates of the chieftains. It was in the month of November, and before the clans came up to each other, it was beginning to get dusky. Macpherson and his men being a few minutes in advance of their foes, crossed a small wooden foot-bridge

which was thrown over the burn, and swelled to a prodigious size by the late rains,—determined to give Campbell battle on his own ground.

The hostile parties met. The signal was given by either chieftain, and the clashing of swords mingled with the war-cry of each clan, instantly broke on the ear. The deeds of prowess achieved by either clan were unparalleled in the annals of Celtic warfare. The vassals of each chieftain were seen falling in every direction. For a time the militant parties were so equally matched, that there was every prospect of the battle not being ended while there remained a man alive. Campbell, however, having had his left arm cut off by the sword of a foe-man, and having besides received a wound in the side, became faint from the loss of blood, and fell on the ground. One of his retainers who saw him fall, carried him off the field, and deeming the bridge a better place than a wet moor, laid him on it. Macpherson's men and those of his opponent were still ignorant of the fate of Campbell; but missing the voice of

their chief, the Campbells at length became dispirited, and were clearly about to lose the day.

Macpherson, perceiving that his men noticed this, fought with renewed vigour. At length the Campbells fell back some yards. "Guard the bridge, and cut up the last man of them, chief and all," cried Macpherson to his vassals. "I will do it myself!" he immediately added, bounding at the same time towards the bridge.

In the confusion of the moment, and in the partial darkness, he stumbled and fell over Campbell, who was lying at the nearest end of the bridge, weltering in his gore.

Campbell, disabled, possibly dying, though he was, recognized the person of his old implacable foe. By an uncommon effort he partially raised his body, and pulling out his dirk—he had lost his sword on the battle field—plunged it in the breast of Macpherson. "To thy long home with thee, rascal," cried Campbell, as he pierced the heart of his foe.

The words had been scarcely spoken when the bridge, with the two chieftains on it, was

swept away by the force of the swollen stream. An imprecation from Campbell as he fell into the water, was the only sound which either was heard to utter. They were both ingulphed that moment in the foaming waters.

Bereft of their chieftains, and completely exhausted, the remaining Campbells and Macphersons ceased hostilities.

On the following morning the implacable chieftains were found by the side of the river, about ten yards from where the bridge had been swept away. They were partially buried in sand, and firmly grasped each other. Their wild and angry features told of the state of mind in which they had closed their lives.

The successor of either chieftain took up the quarrel with, if possible, a spirit of increased bitterness. Indeed, the opinion of other chieftains was, that they would nurse their deadly hate until the very names of Campbell and Macpherson had become extinct.

"I *must* have the proprietorship of that piece of ground settled in some way or other," said Macpherson to one of his leading retainers, as

they were one day talking of the quarrels and conflicts between the two clans, to which it had led.

"That will only be when you have dirked Campbell," observed Macpherson's retainer.

"The sooner, the better, for more reasons than one," said the chieftain. "I will meet him on the field to-morrow at twelve o'clock. Go and order the men to meet me here in the morning at the sound of the tocsin."

The vassal obeyed his chieftain's injunctions. A note was that instant dispatched to Campbell, demanding a meeting on a heath-clad moor in the parish of Ardersier. Campbell returned an answer to the effect, that he was ready to meet Macpherson by night or by day, either in single combat, or with clan against clan.

To-morrow came. The gathering of the clans took place, and severally marshalled by their chieftain, proceeded to the scene of conflict. They advanced to each other. The signal was given, and the battle commenced. Each clan fought with peerless bravery: there were several hundreds on either side. Every individual

indeed, deemed capable of slaying his man, had been summoned to the field. Each acted as if from a conviction that the issue of the conflict, and the honour of his chieftain and clan, had solely depended on his feats of valour. Such were the spirit and bravery with which the gallant men fought on either side, that ere two hours had elapsed there were not above one hundred men, out of five times that number, to keep the battle up; the others were all strewed on the ground, either dead or disabled by their wounds. Both chieftains were wounded; but were still able, by example as well as by precept, to stimulate their respective followers to farther deeds of heroism.

While the work of extermination was thus going forward, and the conflict promised soon to cease for want of soldiers, the sound of music was heard in the distance. Still, so intent were the militants on either side on vanquishing their foes, that they did not pause a moment to learn the cause.

A few minutes elapsed, and the word "Hold!" was pronounced in a stentorian and determined

voice. The conflicting parties unconsciously paused in their work of death. Campbell and Macpherson, who were now for the first time swording it together, both looked up. It was Cameron, a powerful Chieftain from Inverness-shire, who had spoken. He was attended by one hundred able-bodied clansmen.

"Cease your combat this moment," said Cameron, sternly.

"Not while I can draw a sword," answered Campbell, gasping for breath as he spoke.

"Not until either of us is stretched lifeless on the ground," said Macpherson, darting a glance of supreme scorn and ire at his adversary.

Both the combatants, though seemingly unconscious of it, continued motionless before Cameron. The few retainers of either chieftain that still survived, did the same.

"Whichever party dares to make another thrust at his opponent, makes me his foe," said Cameron.

"The honour of the clan is at stake ; let us fight it out," said Campbell.

"Victory or death," said Macpherson.

“Well, renew the conflict if you choose; but remember that the moment a sword is drawn, I espouse the cause of the clan against whom it is drawn; and entire extermination awaits the vassals of the self-willed, presumptuous chieftain.”

Both chieftains saw that if Cameron and his men took the side of one of the clans, every man of the other must be slain at once. Accordingly, though both chieftains, notwithstanding their exhausted state, burned with impatience for a renewal of the conflict, each was afraid to commence the battle.

“What is the cause of this mortal hate?” inquired Cameron, addressing himself to the hostile chieftains, after all parties had stood some time, inactive and silent.

“A piece of ground,” answered Campbell and Macpherson simultaneously.

Cameron had some previous knowledge of the tract of land which had been the subject of dispute between the chieftains, but wished to hear from their own mouths the grounds on which each claimed it as his. Both preferred their claims.

"Will each of you submit to my decision?" asked Cameron.

"I will with all my heart," answered Campbell. Macpherson expressed himself to the same effect.

"Then," said Cameron, "my award is, that the ground be equally divided between you; you, Campbell, getting the half nearest your estate and you, Macpherson, the half which is nearest yours."

Both chieftains expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with the decision of Cameron.

"Then," said the latter, "shake hands together in token of reconciliation, and let there be no more ill blood between you."

Campbell and Macpherson most cordially shook each other by the hand.

"We must have other symbols of friendship," remarked Cameron. "Go," said he, addressing himself to Knocktophie, one of his own superior retainers, "go to yonder house," pointing to a cottage some quarter of a mile distant, "and bring us something to eat and drink."

Knocktophie, in obedience to the commands

of his superior, darted off in an instant. In fifteen minutes he returned with a large kebbock of cheese, and a bottle of whisky.

Hard by lay a round stone, about seven feet in length and six feet in circumference. Cameron's men took this stone and fixed one end of it in the ground. On the other end were laid whisky and cheese, the usual symbols of friendship in the Highlands.


Cameron, taking a knife out of his pocket, cut up the kebbock into fragments, and filling the glasses with the whisky, "Here's good health to both of you," said he, "and may your friendship be as lasting as your clans." As he spoke he shook the lately hostile chieftains severally by the hand, and drank the glass of whisky.

"Now," said Cameron, "you drink each other's health, and an eternal grave to all past feuds and animosities."

Campbell and Macpherson did so; and soon after departed. From that day there were no more differences between the two clans: on the contrary, the strongest friendship between them followed.

The circumstances of the whole affair became known to James the Fifth; and that monarch wrote with his own hand, a letter to Cameron, thanking him for his humane and opportune interposition on behalf of the hostile chieftains.

The stone on which the cheese and whisky were laid, was ever afterwards called the Kebbock Stone. It retains the same name and stands on the same spot till this day. It is only about eighty yards off the road, on the right-hand side, leading from Nairn to Campbelton. It was pointed out to the writer some years since by the guard of the Star coach. The same individual will still show it to any of his passengers who may be curious in such matters.



THE CELTIC LOVERS.

IN one of the most remote corners of Inverness-shire are still to be seen the remains of Macvey House, an edifice which was for ages the mansion of a family whose name still holds a prominent place in the traditional annals of that county. The situation of this now ruinous domicile is singularly romantic. It is in the centre of the face of a hill of considerable altitude, but gradual ascent. It embraces a southward view of the most charming kind, including, as novelists say, hill and dale, and wood and vale, river and lake, and a great variety of less picturesque but still delightful scenery.

Some hundred and fifty years ago, this once famous mansion ceased to be inhabited. It was then, through its great age, fast verging to decay; and must, in order to its security and

the comfort of the inmates, have soon undergone a thorough repair. It belonged at the time to Norman Macvey, the sole male survivor of the family. He had one sister, Euphemia, who resided with himself. In the event of Macvey dying without legitimate issue, the estate, which was of great value, was to become the property of Euphemia. And as Macvey was a man constitutionally indifferent to the charms of women, and withal considerably older than his sister, there was every probability of her being his successor.

Euphemia was the *beau ideal* of female loveliness, both as regarded her person and mind. To be in her company was perilous in the extreme for any unmarried man, provided he possessed the ordinary susceptibilities of human nature. None such ever saw her without admiring her; very few without feeling, in all its vigorous activity, the undefined and indefinable emotion called love.

Though at this time only in her twenty-first year, the hand of Euphemia had been repeatedly sought in marriage. To one of her suitors she

signified assent: to all the others, of course, a denial was given.

The accepted worshipper of the young lady's beauty and virtues, was Roderick Macintosh, the second son of a neighbouring farmer, in respectable though not affluent circumstances. He was a young man of good personal appearance, and of the most unexceptionable moral character. He had completed his medical studies, and was on the eve of going out as surgeon on board an East Indiaman. He was to return in fourteen or fifteen months, when the marriage was to take place.

Among those whose proffered hand Euphemia had rejected, was Murdo Sutherland, the elder son of a baronet residing at some miles distance. His habits were most irregular; he laughed at all distinctions in morals. He was, in a word, what in the language of the fashionable world is emphatically called a rake.

Never dreaming that he, a person who was to succeed a title and valuable estate on the demise of his father, whose advanced years and growing infirmities indicated his propinquity to the narrow

house,—never dreaming that he could meet with a refusal from *any* of the sex, he could ill brook the unequivocal rejection of his offer on the part of Euphemia. His pride was deeply wounded; his mortification was extreme. Though on terms of the utmost familiarity with Macvey, and a frequent visitor at his house, he determined never again to cross its threshold. One consideration which contributed largely to his forming this resolution, was, that as Macvey was perfectly aware of his regards for his sister, he must, in his opinion, have sanctioned her rejection of his proffered hand.

The cause, however, of this sudden breaking off of his long and close intimacy with Macvey, he carefully concealed in his own bosom. No one but himself knew anything of it. Euphemia alone conjectured it.

The circumstance excited the surprise of the friends of both parties: no one was more astonished at it than Macvey. After waiting patiently, but in vain, for some time, under the impression that his former friend might explain his mysterious conduct, he asked an explanation

from him. The latter imagining that Macvey must be perfectly aware of the step taken by his sister, and that consequently to ask an explanation from him was only adding insult to disappointment, returned, in the heat of the moment, a tartly-written answer.

In less than fifteen minutes after perusing this letter, Macvey dispatched a note to Murdo, demanding either an apology or such satisfaction as the circumstances called for. A reply was received the same afternoon, appointing a time and place for a hostile meeting next day. The weapons, according to the custom of the age, were to be broad swords.

Euphemia happening that night accidentally to be in her brother's sleeping apartment after he had retired to rest, saw a letter which he had dropped lying on the floor. Her curiosity prompted her to read it. The truth flashed on her mind that she was the cause of the hostile, perhaps fatal meeting about to take place. She uttered a loud shriek, and fell back on a chair. The noise awoke Macvey: he inquired the cause of Euphemia's alarm. For a time she was silent;

but, on being pressed, she disclosed all that had passed between her and Murdo Sutherland.

Macvey was astonished beyond measure at the circumstance of his sister refusing the hand of Sutherland. He prided himself on the antiquity and aristocratic station of his family. The man only who could make a similar boast, he seemed to think worthy of wearing the human form. All the errors of Murdo's heart and life were overlooked because he was a scion of a respectable family.

Macvey having somewhat recovered himself, wrote a note to Murdo apologizing for the intemperate expressions contained in his previous letter, and stating he could now see enough to satisfy himself that he (Murdo) was justified in withdrawing from his (Macvey's) house.

Murdo returned an answer early next morning, expressing himself satisfied, and intimating that, in consequence, no hostile meeting should take place.

When Macvey had despatched his apologetic note to Murdo, he put Euphemia to a new inquisition regarding the causes of her conduct.

"Euphemia," said he, in a stern tone, "what madness could have induced thee to refuse such an offer? Thou mayest live fifty years before such another is made thee!"

Euphemia was silent.

"Hast thou no tongue in thy head, Miss, that thou art thus mute?" continued the proud Macvey in yet more angry accents, while his eye glared with indignation.

Euphemia's heart was full: her feelings quite overpowered her: she was unable to utter a word.

"Perhaps thou art in love with some one else; it may be thou art pledged to another? Is that the case?" continued Macvey.

Euphemia burst into tears and muttered out a "Yes."

"Yea, indeed, Madam! And so thou hast thought fit to manage a matter of such importance, without consulting thy brother; without even mentioning it to him. But pray who may the swain be to whom thou hast promised thy hand?"

Euphemia wiped the tears from her eyes with

her handkerchief: she sobbed loudly but made no answer.

"I tell thee, Miss, that if thou canst not answer thy brother's question, thou shalt no longer remain under his roof. Again I say, who is this favoured lover of thine?"

"Roderick Macintosh," was the answer, lisped out in scarcely audible accents—accents broken by the fulness of her heart.

"Roderick Macintosh?" exclaimed Macvey, in a tone which shook the room and thrilled through the ears of Euphemia with an almost stupifying effect.

The countenance of Macvey was now terrific to behold. Never was the passion of anger so visibly depicted in the human face. For a little, he looked at Euphemia without uttering a word; and his looks went like daggers to her inmost soul. Hitherto he had been sitting up in his bed. Now he pulled part of his clothes to him and rose and paced the apartment to and fro without uttering a syllable.

Unable any longer to support herself, Euphemia sat down on a chair.

Partially recovering himself, after the lapse of a minute or two, from the paroxysm of rage into which he had thrown himself, "I ask thee once more," said Macvey, "whether thou meanest to degrade thyself, thine ancestors, and me, by marrying that young lad of so mean an origin?"

Euphemia gave no other reply than a succession of sobs and a flood of tears.

"Well, madam, as you have got into a scrape, I will give thee a little time to get out of it as you best can; but remember that if ever this Roderick dares to put foot in my house again, he does it at the peril of his life."

So saying Macvey threw himself on his bed, and Euphemia withdrew.

Macvey had seen Roderick repeatedly in the house when attending one of his servants in his professional capacity, there being no practising physician within many miles of Macvey House. It was thus that Euphemia and he first got acquainted.

Altogether ignorant of what had occurred, Roderick went next afternoon to Macvey House, ostensibly on a professional visit to a sick ser-

vant, but in reality to meet with Euphemia. It was in autumn; and the shades of night were beginning to fall as he entered a beautiful avenue which led to the house. Macvey, while taking his usual evening walk, met him. Darting a fierce glance at Roderick and pulling a dagger from his side, which, according to the then prevailing custom in the Highlands, he invariably carried on his person, he grasped the weapon in his hand, and brandishing it in the air, rushed onwards Roderick, exclaiming, "Begone, villain! this instant from my property; and know, Sir, that if you ever again dare to put a foot on my soil, your life shall be the forfeit of your presumption!" As he uttered the words, an expression of consummate scorn and anger crimsoned his countenance.

Roderick was struck with astonishment. For a moment or two he stood motionless and silent. Recovering himself in a slight degree from his amazement, "Pray, Sir," said he, in a mild and inoffensive tone, "what offence have I given?"

"Dost thou ask me that, serf?" replied the enraged Highland aristocrat, in a voice of thunder.

“And thou hadst the audacity to make love to my sister.” The violence of his passion choked his forth utterance. “Rascal,” he resumed after a few moments’ silence, “rascal, if thou hast a soul within thy vile body, to be saved, ask mercy of thy Maker instantly; for rather than that the blood of my ancestors mingle with yours, this dagger shall go both to your and *her* heart.”

A dead thrust at the breast of Roderick was that instant made. The latter sprang back, and by that means escaped the otherwise mortal aim. In the desperation of the moment, and seeing his own life could only be saved by taking that of the haughty Macvey, he closed on him before another thrust could be made, and wrenching the dagger from his hand, he plunged it into his bosom. Macvey uttered a groan, reeled, staggered, and fell.

Roderick sought for safety in flight.

In about ten minutes after the dreadful scuffle, one of the men-servants of Macvey House discovered his master laying on the ground, as if apparently in the agonies of death. He ran to the house and gave the alarm. The appalling

intelligence spread with the swiftness of lightning. Before two hours elapsed, the entire population, within a circuit of several miles, were at the house, to which by this time Macvey had been carried. He was still in life but unable to speak. He was asked who had committed the atrocity. A motion of the hand requesting pen and ink, was the only answer. These were brought to him, and a piece of paper put before him. He essayed to write. The word "One" was perfectly legible, though the letters were unshapely. The letters "Roder" followed, but in the act of forming the last letter the pen dropped from his fingers. He fell back and expired.

All was now conjecture as to him whose hand had directed the dagger which, by depriving Macvey of life, had for ever extinguished a family that had, for several centuries, been so influential in the district. Many conflicting opinions were advanced on the subject. Various individuals, all innocent as the child unborn, were suspected; and it was even proposed that, on the strength of suspicions entertained, two

of these should be apprehended, imprisoned, and examined by the Sheriff of the county.

A numerous party were fully equipped for the pursuit of the assassin, when an old man who had that moment arrived at the house, mentioned that he had met a young man evidently much agitated, and breathing quickly from rapid travelling. He mentioned the place where he met him—the direction he was taking—and described the apparel he wore as well as he could from a passing look obtained by the aid of moonlight.

Several of those present recollected that they had that afternoon seen Roderick going towards the house; and the description given by the old man, of the dress of the person he had met on the road, under such unusual circumstances, corresponding with the apparel of Roderick, it was at once concluded by all present, that on his head rested the guilt of Macvey's death.

In the absence of the regular officers of the law, a party amounting to twelve of the most active and able-bodied of those present, instantly set off in pursuit of Roderick. The latter had,

by this time, concealed himself in a covert of whins, a little distance from a well-frequented road; where he had intended to remain until after midnight, when he thought that as there would then be fewer persons moving about, he would have a greater chance of escaping out of the country. While in the act of laying this flattering unction to his soul, he imagined he heard the tread of men some forty or fifty yards distant, as if approaching the spot where he lay. He leaped to his feet and rushed through the thicket with all the speed which the scanty light and bushy nature of the plantation would permit. He got to the road, when he hesitated a moment, being at a loss as to what direction he should now take. The road at the place at which he stood was at the base of a hill which gave it so sudden a turn, that in one direction a person could not see ten yards before him. While yet undecided, and also half-stupified with the thought of what he had done, and what he expected as the consequences of the deed, a *posse* of men, all of a sudden, surrounded him. To have sought safety in an attempt at flight,

would have been the height of madness; he was, besides, both mentally and physically unfit for any effort to escape. He therefore submitted, without a struggle, to have his hands tied. He was conducted by the party to the county prison.

The first intimation of the catastrophe which had happened, threw Euphemia into the deepest anguish. When informed that Roderick had inflicted the mortal wound, she uttered a loud shriek and fell senseless on the ground. She was lifted up: in a few minutes she opened her eyes—they gave a vacant stare. Her mental aberration, however, was of but temporary duration; in four weeks, by judicious treatment, “the noblest gift of God” was restored to her. It was only, however, to increase her suffering—to learn that Roderick was in prison, and that, in all probability, the doom that awaited him was a public execution.

The day for holding the half-yearly assizes at Inverness approached. The officers of the crown had appointed that Roderick should take his trial there. He employed counsel and made every preparation for his defence. At first he

thought of confessing all the circumstances of the case; but his counsel dissuaded him from that, as there were no witnesses or proof to substantiate his statements.

The plea therefore of "not guilty" was put in. The trial accordingly commenced, and occupied many hours. Roderick's counsel made an able and ingenious defence, but to no purpose. Though there were no witnesses to the circumstances under which Macvey received the wound which terminated fatally, the circumstantial evidence was so strong against Roderick, that the jury after a few minutes' deliberation returned a verdict of "guilty." One thing which weighed much with the jury in bringing in this verdict, was the fact of Roderick being on terms of marriage with Euphemia; a fact which had been placed beyond all doubt by the production in court of several copies of letters from her to Roderick, and also of letters from him to her, wherein both parties had unequivocally spoken of marriage. These letters had been discovered by a female servant in Euphemia's escrutoire, during the time the latter was in a state of

fatuity. The impression they made on the court and jury was, that the prisoner had committed deliberate murder with the view of thereby at once removing every obstacle to his marriage with Euphemia, and also to his accession to the estate of Macvey. Roderick was sentenced to be publicly hanged at Inverness after the lapse of the usual time.*

The day appointed for the execution was now at hand. Roderick made every effort his ingenuity could suggest, to escape from prison. But all his exertions were fruitless; his hopes had all fled, and his mind was now solely occupied in preparing for another world and in nerving himself for the dread crisis before him, in this.

An idea crossed Euphemia's mind. There was a shrewd and active female servant, named Elspet Munro, who had been ten years in the family. This maid had on all occasions given Euphemia proofs of the strongest attachment.

* In Scotland, then as now, six weeks intervened between passing sentence of death and carrying the sentence into execution.

The latter one morning called Elspet into her room, disclosed to her a plan she had devise for the escape of Roderick, and begged her assistance in carrying it into effect; adding that in the event of success her services should not be forgotten.

"I have something of importance to communicate, Elspet," said Euphemia. "May I rely on your secrecy, whether or not you accede to my proposals?" she added in a yet more emphatic tone.

"Didst thou, lady, ever yet find me unworthy of thy confidence?" answered Elspet. As she uttered the words her eyes, respectfully raised to those of Euphemia, administered a gentle rebuke to the latter.

"Never, girl," "replied Euphemia," and I *know* that to doubt in *this* case were to wrong you. You know, Elspet, what passed between Roderick and me: you know he is in prison; that he is sentenced to death; that the day appointed for his execution is Wednesday next."

"That is known, ma'am, to all the country," observed the maid in a feeling tone.

“Would you undertake to visit him in prison, in the character of his sister, and after obtaining access to his cell, put off your own clothes, give them to him, and put on his? And who knows but Providence may thus enable him to escape?”

“With all my heart,” answered Elspet, her countenance brightening at the proposal. “My best exertions shall be made in the matter,” she added with much feeling.

Roderick had the night before found an opportunity of communicating to Euphemia, that by means of files which had been clandestinely conveyed to him by a relative, he had fairly cut through his irons, and that the only thing that prevented his escape, was the impossibility of breaking through the walls of his dungeon.

Elspet set out that day for Inverness. She arrived just before it became dark. With a large black cloak almost covering her face, and having all the appearance of the deepest grief, she applied to the turnkey for “permission to take a last look of her brother.”

The jailer admitted her at once, only inquir-

ing as to the probable length of the interview, that he might be at hand to let her out again. She, with great apparent difficulty, sobbed out, "In half-an-hour."

After showing her into the cell, the turnkey shut the door and retired.

The time was duly improved. Clothes were exchanged, and each put on the other's. Roderick's feet only had been in irons; and these being already cut through, he had no difficulty in unfettering himself. Elspet put her feet into the irons. The half-hour expired. The turnkey's foot was heard coming up the stair. Roderick and Elspet, agreeably to previous understanding, fixed themselves in each other's embraces. The door opened; the jailer entered. "Well, my good woman, are you ready yet?" inquired the jailer in a feeling tone; for even in the most hardening of callings humanity does occasionally assert its supremacy.

All the answer which the turnkey received, was a number of deep sobs and a yet closer clinging to each other on the part of Roderick and Elspet.

"You *must* come now: it can do no good to stay longer," said the jailer, taking hold of both and tearing them from each other.

The jailer held a lantern in his hand, in which glimmered a penny candle, which only served to make darkness visible; but even though there had been a blaze of light, the way in which Roderick and Elspet clung to each other's embraces would in the hurry and confusion of the moment have made it in the highest degree improbable, that the turnkey would have detected the exchange of clothes that had taken place.

Laying down his lantern on the flagged floor, he said in accents which denoted that his heart had well nigh regained its professional callousness, "Come, come, you must part." And so saying, he took one party in one hand, and the other in the other, and by a desperate exertion of his strength tore them from each other. Snatching up the lantern with his left hand, he dragged Roderick with his right, under the impression it was his sister, to the door, which fastened with a ponderous bolt.

The supposed sister of the sentenced man

was conducted down the narrow stair which leads to the outer door; which having reached, the jailer turned the key from the outside and parted with his visitor.

Roderick bounded out of Inverness. He directed his steps to Macvey House. One interview with Euphemia, and he was to quit Scotland for America. The house of a near relative lay on his way. He entered, to the inexpressible surprise of the inmates. An explanation of the circumstances connected with his escape from prison was the work of one instant; the doffing his female clothing and donning that of a male cousin, was the work of another. He bade his relatives farewell, and rushed out of the house. He halted not, though the distance was more than twenty miles, until he was in the arms of his Euphemia, who, as will readily be believed, felt overpowered with joy on learning the success of her stratagem.

Still Roderick knew he stood on perilous ground. Part he must from his Euphemia, now, if that were possible, doubly dearer than ever to his heart. He hastily told her of his destination,

and assured her that the moment he effected a landing he would write for her to come to him.

The time of parting came. "Now, my adored Euphemia, we must——." The sound of the hoofs of horses was heard, seemingly about twenty or thirty yards off, ere he had completed the sentence.

"Hide thyself for thy life; come with me!" exclaimed Euphemia, in much trepidation, taking him hurriedly with her to one of the servants' bed-rooms, in a remote part of the house. The apartment was quite dark, but he groped his way to the bed and sought for concealment under it. Euphemia instantly shut the door, and hastened to the kitchen.

Determined to resist to the last, in the event of being discovered by the officers of the law, Roderick had provided himself with a dirk at the house of his relative when changing his clothes.

A loud knock at the kitchen door, and the sound of men's voices, were heard in a few seconds after Roderick had secreted himself beneath the bed. The door was opened; and in rushed three men, officers of the law, from

Inverness. The turnkey had occasion to visit Roderick's cell about two hours after his escape. A ringlet of Elspet's hair happened at the time to hang over her forehead. What had occurred flashed across his mind: he darted out and gave the alarm. A pursuit was immediately ordered; and as the authorities were aware of the tender intimacy between Euphemia and Roderick, the officers were instructed to make Macvey House the first place of their search.

"Is the criminal that has escaped from Inverness here?" inquired one of the officers, in a gruff tone of voice.

"What criminal do you mean?" answered Euphemia, affecting much surprise at the question.

"Roderick Macintosh," replied one of the officers.

"How canst thou mock me, man? How canst thou be so cruel as to mention *his* name?" said Euphemia.

"We had better search the house," observed one of the men, who had not opened his mouth before.

"Let us go up-stairs first," suggested another. And up-stairs they went.

"Go with them," said Euphemia to one of the servant maids, "go with them, and let them satisfy themselves."

Roderick, stretched out beneath the bed, had heard the words that had passed, with the exception of the proposal to commence the search up-stairs, which had been uttered in a lower tone.

The moment the officers had gone up-stairs, Euphemia bounded along the dark passage which led to the apartment in which Roderick had hid himself, for the purpose of telling him to rise and make his escape as quickly as possible.

He heard Euphemia's foot in the passage: he thought it was that of one of the officers; and grasping his dagger in his hand, he started from his hiding-place, "Take that, ruffian, for thy pains," he exclaimed emphatically, as the door opened and a figure entered. Ere the last word was out of his mouth, his dirk was up to the hilt in the bosom of Euphemia. "Roderick!" shrieked Euphemia; and she fell back

on the threshold of the door. The dreadful truth flashed on his mind. "Heavens!" he exclaimed, "it is my Euphemia!"

Her fall and Roderick's exclamation of horror, were heard in the kitchen. A servant maid who was in it at the time, rushed with a light to the tragical spot. Euphemia lay weltering in her gore. Her eyes were yet open; but they were cognisant of no object. The vital spark was in the act of being extinguished. "Gracious Heavens! this is more than can be endured! My dagger!" cried Roderick, in an agony of despair. Half distracted, the female ran upstairs to give the alarm. The officers and the servants who accompanied them, were down in an instant. The two lovers lay stretched beside each other. Euphemia's breast had ceased to heave: Roderick was in the throes of death; his dagger was found up to its hilt in his bosom. In two minutes more he breathed his last.

THE FIRST AND LAST ROBBERY.

"I WILL not, I cannot endure the scene any longer!" said Robert Dawson to himself, as his four children—he had a fifth, but it was at the breast—one day clung around him, imploring something wherewith to satisfy the cravings of hunger. "I cannot endure it longer: I *must* by some means or other get bread for the poor things."

There was not a man within the confines of Banffshire of more strict integrity than Robert Dawson. Though never affluent, he had from his youth up until now been in comfortable circumstances. His late reverse of fortune involved no compromise of principle. It was produced by causes over which he had no control. He had embarked his all in a speculation which everybody thought would prove a profitable one.

The issue showed how erroneous human calculations sometimes are. He was all at once reduced to extreme poverty, and himself, his wife, and family, subjected to all its attendant wants and woes.

For some months Robert and his partner in life, bore up under their sad and sudden reverse, with a fortitude which exceeded all praise. Not a murmur was heard to escape the lips of either. And as far as they themselves were concerned, they would have continued reconciled to their condition,—in the hope, though against hope, that a brighter and better day would ultimately dawn on them. But they had children ; and these gathered round the mother, who had been for weeks stretched on a pallet of straw, imploring by the irresistible eloquence of their looks, their cries, their tears, something wherewith to allay the gnawings of hunger. For days, Robert witnessed the scene with feelings which do not admit of description. At last it pierced his soul so sharply, that he could no longer endure it: the independence of his spirit sunk before it. He came to the resolution—he uttered the words

recorded above. He sallied forth to appeal to the charitable and humane.

He who is the subject of real and deep distress, is generally less qualified to tell his tale of woe with effect, than the person whose wants and wretchedness are only fictitious. Such was the case with Robert Dawson; and the consequence was that his application for assistance was in every instance unsuccessful. What was to be done? His apparently dying wife and famishing children were again pictured to his mind in all the soul-touching wretchedness of their situation. He feared if no food were given them in an hour or two, one or more of them, by that time, would be lying a corpse. A feeling of desperation came over him: he hurried to an adjacent wood, determined to rob the first individual he met in that secluded place, though death, either on the spot or by the hands of the hangman, should be the consequence.

An opportunity soon presented itself of carrying his resolution into effect. He espied a gentleman walking on foot along the road which went through the wood. Unacquainted

with the feelings and practices of a foot-pad, Robert's breast palpitated and his limbs quivered, as he observed the gentleman approach the place where he lay concealed. His determination, however, was fixed, and as the gentleman came up, he leaped out from his hiding place, seized the traveller by the collar, and demanded his purse. Observing that Robert had no pistol, nor even so much as a stick in his hand, the other resisted. A struggle ensued. Robert tripped up the gentleman, and when on the ground, succeeded by his superior physical strength in taking from his pocket a five-pound note.

Robert then allowed the other to rise and depart,—and set off himself for home to give his wife and family the benefit of his booty.

He had not proceeded many yards on his way when his conscience loudly condemned him for the robbery he had committed. A violent struggle ensued in his breast between honesty and commiseration for his famishing wife and children. The decision he came to was, that he would not take what was not his own, but would yet trust in Providence.

He that moment turned from his homeward course: he ran as fast as he could after the gentleman: he overtook him, and placing the five-pound note in his hand, "Sir," said he, "here is your money; I have done wrong in taking it: I could not be at ease until I restored it; nothing but the direst necessity could ever have made me form, far less execute, the purpose of robbing a fellow-man. From my inmost soul I beg your pardon!"

Robert wheeled round to withdraw when he had restored the money, but the gentleman, struck by his appearance and his manner, desired him to stay for a moment or two.

"Your conduct surprises me," said the gentleman; "what could have induced you to take the highway, and then, after having succeeded, at the risk of your own life, in getting part of my money, to come and restore it? It is not often that foot-pads trouble themselves about the honesty of their practices."

"Sir," said Robert emphatically, "I am *no* foot-pad. You are the first I have ever attempted to rob in my life."

"Your manner convinces me of that," remarked the other. "Pray, tell me what is it that has made you form the resolution of committing robbery?"

"A sick, perhaps a dying wife, and five young and helpless children, Sir." It was with difficulty, from the swellings of Robert's breast, that the words obtained an utterance.

"Poor man, I feel for your and their condition," said the gentleman. "Do your wife and family reside far from this?" he added.

"About a mile and a half, Sir," was the answer.

"Will you allow me to accompany you to your home, to witness the affecting scene?" continued the stranger.

"The sight would only hurt your feelings," answered Robert.

The gentleman persisted in the expression of his desire to see the repentant robber's wife and family. The latter at last assented; and both proceeded to the house of woe.

The scene which the stranger there witnessed, baffles description. All his previous conceptions

of destitution and distress shrank before it. Exhausted from her protracted abstinence from anything in the shape of food, Robert's wife lay on a bed of straw, in a dark corner of a fireless apartment, seemingly unconscious of the presence of either her husband or the stranger. The sucking infant lay at her breast, restless and crying for nourishment. The two eldest children were moving about like perfect skeletons. The moment their father appeared, they set up a loud cry for something to eat. The process of starvation was well nigh completed in the case of the other two children ; they were laying together among a few rags beside the bed—if it deserved the name—of their mother.

The gentleman's heart was too full, from the scene which he witnessed, for speaking much. "Take that," said he to the husband and father—putting the five pounds which had been restored to him into Robert's hand—"take that ; I am come from abroad, and am going to reside in this part of the country : I will see what can be done for you."

He departed. Robert's sense of gratitude to

his unknown benefactor was too deep to permit an audible expression of it.

Robert that instant went and procured food and fuel with part of the money thus put, as if by a miracle, into his hand. He brought home some wine to his wife and the two children whose sufferings from want had been greatest. In the space of three hours, each of the sufferers was manifestly in the way of recovery. In an hour afterwards, the unknown benevolent gentleman returned, bringing with him a female from a neighbouring village, to attend on Robert's family. He had previously given the woman a two-pound note, giving her strict instructions to provide everything for the family which their necessities required.

Robert Dawson was lost in astonishment at this excess of benevolence on the part of a gentleman he had never before seen. And his distressed wife, as consciousness returned, was equally lost in wonder and gratitude.

The female staid up all night in Robert's house; and by breakfast-time next day the whole family were so far recovered, as to look

altogether different beings from what they were when the stranger first saw them. In the forenoon, he returned. A glow of satisfaction lighted up his countenance as he witnessed the altered condition of the family. The mother with her sucking infant on her knee, sat in a chair by a comfortable fire. He sat down beside her. "Do you not know me?" he said, looking her in the face.

"No, Sir, indeed I do not," answered Mrs. Dawson.

"Have you no recollection of seeing my face before?"

The poor woman looked at her own and family's benefactor again. "I think I have," said she, with much modesty and softness of tone.

"Do you not recollect your brother James?"

The words went to her heart; she swooned away in her chair. She soon, however, recovered her consciousness. The strange gentleman was her brother. He had gone to India twenty-two years before. He had returned, quite unexpectedly, with an ample fortune. He was on his way, on foot, from the town at which

the stage-coach had stopped, to B——, his native village, when Robert robbed him. After visiting the house of woe the first time, he proceeded to his native village. His first inquiries were naturally about his sister; for she was the only one he had. He learnt with the deepest pain, the reverses which had befallen herself and family, and their consequent privations. A description of the personal appearance of her husband, and his place of residence, served to satisfy him that it was his brother-in-law he had encountered in the wood of F——; and that it was his sister and her children who were suffering the frightful distress he had witnessed in the house he had visited.

He concealed his convictions, however, from his informant at the inn; and deeming the discovery might be too much for the feelings of his sister on his second visit, he prudently abstained at that time from making known his relationship to her.

From that day until the day of their several deaths, neither Robert Dawson, his wife, nor family, knew what want was.

THE NEW YEAR.

A FRAGMENT.

“ANOTHER year has passed away !” I ejaculated with myself contemporaneously with opening my eyes this morning;* and forthwith wished in my own mind, in the spirit of genuine philanthropy, a happy new year to all mankind.

There is no period at which the generality of mankind seem so much disposed to eat, drink, and be merry, as at the close of one year and the commencement of another. I belong not to that school of austere moralists who condemn amusements and hilarity in the abstract. My conviction, on the contrary, is, that man was not made for the purpose of always hanging his head, or resigning himself to a melancholy mood of mind; but that there are seasons in which he may,

* Written on the first day of the year.

without outraging either a revealed or natural system of morals, indulge in exercises which administer to his animal spirits.

But the termination of one year and the commencement of another, is an era in man's existence calculated to generate in every reflecting mind emotions of a mingled nature; emotions of a sorrowful as well as a joyful kind. It must indeed be grateful to him, in taking a retrospective view of the year which has just finished its course, to think that, amid the myriads of human beings who in the lapse of that time have had their connection with this world utterly and for ever dissolved, and changed their earthly habitations for the noiseless recesses of the grave,—he has been favoured by the Governor of the world, with a continuance of life, and a reasonable prospect of enjoying it still longer.

In looking back on the year which had just merged itself in the immeasurableness of that eternity which is passed, it is also consolatory to reflect that a certain proportion of the trials and difficulties, the pains and the diversified evils of life, have passed away with it. Human

life in its various grades is a greatly chequered scene. The most exalted personage that ever walked our world, never spent a year of his existence without sharing largely of the ills as well as the bliss of life, in common with the most obscure and despised individual doomed to maintain a continued struggle until he finds repose in the tomb. The truth is, there is infinitely more of imaginary than of actual difference in the degrees of misery and happiness endured in the higher and lower stations of life. All men have their joys and all have their sorrows; and, taking mankind in the aggregate, the measure of joy and sorrow assigned to the exalted and the humble, is nearly the same. No reflecting individual, therefore, can take a retrospective view of a departed year, without a consciousness that while it was gradually running its course, he was the child of many sorrows and groaned under a complication of evils. And in reflecting on the fact, that whatever may be his future fortunes in the world, his past miseries are *past*, he must necessarily feel a certain measure of gratification.

In addition to every other source of satisfaction at the commencement of a new year, man has the luxury of hope wherewithal to regale his mind. I advert not at present to those immortal objects to which hope points, beyond the confines of this world. Hope is to man, even in reference to his present state of being, a treasure of inestimable value. Without it existence would be intolerable. Instead of a blessing it would prove a curse. The crime of suicide would, in fact, become so prevalent that the earth would soon be depopulated. Its rational inhabitants would ere long disappear from off its face, and the brute creation would claim it as their sole heritage. The most forlorn and miserable of the human race, feel their wretchedness much alleviated in the hope that they will yet see better days. A large, if not the larger proportion of human happiness, is derived from this conviction. At the commencement of a new year our hopes are more than ordinarily sanguine. We feel, as it were, that we have entered on a new and brighter era of our existence; and reason ourselves into the persuasion—ofttimes a

very delusive one—that days and weeks and months of almost unmingled and uninterrupted felicity are before us. And, strange as it may seem, we tenaciously cling to this anticipation of a happy future, notwithstanding the innumerable disappointments our former hopes have encountered, until we feel ourselves enclosed in the rude and repulsive arms of death. The lessons of experience are in this instance utterly lost upon us.

But this season of the year is calculated to engender in every right-principled mind, emotions of sorrow as well as of joy. In surveying the year which has just closed, a consciousness must steal over us, that since its existence we have made very considerable progress in our journey to the grave. And the cold and darksome tomb is not a place which man has any desire to tenant. The most miserable of our race still cling with the utmost tenacity to life. Flesh and blood recoil at the contemplation of the narrow house. Even the wisest and best of mankind, though cheered by the rich consolations of religion, can scarcely reconcile themselves to a

bed in the bosom of the cold earth. The man, therefore, who at the termination of one and the commencement of another year, looks back on the past and forward to the future, will feel his joy mingled with sorrow.

And then how painful is it to reflect on the breaches which the departed year has made in the friendly, if not in the family circle! He must have a limited number of friends, indeed, who can say he has lost none of them during the year which has followed its predecessors into the eternity that is past. If there should be a few hermits or misanthropes in the world who have no friends to lose, there are thousands and tens of thousands of others, from whom, during the lapse of the past twelve months, *many* of those they affectionately regarded, have been snatched away by the hand of death. And what can more deeply wound the susceptible heart, than the loss of those it highly prized, and with whom it held delightful companionship? Nothing surely. The annals of human nature furnish us with countless instances of individuals whose minds were so powerfully affected at their

separation by death from those they loved, that they did not long survive the shock, but followed them in a few months, in some cases in a few weeks, to the mansions of mortality. And it were strange indeed if man, with all his rationality and all his lofty conceptions of what he ought to be, did not feel acutely while ruminating on the departure to another world of those he loved and esteemed in the present, when the more savage of the brute creation set him the example. The instances are innumerable in which the lower animals of almost every species suffer so severely when deprived of their offspring, or when separated from others of their kind with which they were wont to associate, as to die very soon thereafter under the influence of feelings similar to those which break the human heart. A melancholy recollection of those departed ones whom we once numbered among our friends, will frequently obtrude itself on the minds of those addicted to habits of reflection, and possessing in their bosom a drop of the milk of human kindness; but the commencement of a new year is a season peculiarly adapted, for many reasons, for

feeling those melancholy emotions with increased force.

And to him whose philanthropy or good-will towards men, is of so lofty and enlarged a nature as to lead him to include in the list of his friends the entire of the human race,—a retrospective survey of a departed year must be a painful employment indeed. There are men whose minds are so constituted, that they feel a certain degree of sorrow when they hear of the death of any of the family of mankind,—even although the parties were unknown to them; and when such persons recollect that no fewer than forty millions of their brethren are swept from off the face of the earth every year, it were no wonder if their minds saddened at the thought. But the idea is one on which we will not expatiate; we leave our philanthropic readers to follow it out in their own contemplative moments.

THE END.

